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Michael John Morris B.A.

***‘A Manly Desire to Learn’*: the Teaching of the
Classics in Nineteenth Century Scotland**

Submitted for the award of Ph.D. in Classical Studies

November 2008



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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an examination of the teaching of Latin and Greek in Scotland's universities and schools, both private and public, in the nineteenth century. This was the period when the Classics occupied a central position in Scottish education and, as a result, more undergraduates studied these ancient languages than ever before, or since. The thesis also details the very different institutional traditions exemplified by the nation's ancient schools and universities which were the subject of extensive government examination by a succession of Royal Commissions. This native, largely unexplored, tradition in teaching Latin and Greek is shown to be in marked contrast, both in content and pedagogical philosophy, to the English model as exemplified by the classical curricula taught at Oxford, Cambridge and the leading English public schools. This thesis also examines the anglophile forces which attempted to dilute this Scottish tradition of the 'democratic intellect'; a process that was accelerated by the creation, in 1873, of the Scotch Education Department, based in London, which controlled all school inspection and was later responsible for the introduction and management of the national School Leaving Certificate in 1888. The final chapter provides an examination of the importance of two events: the creation of Scotland's first modern university college, Dundee College, in 1882 and the impact of the admission of women to all the nation's universities a decade later.

Contents

Preface	7
Introduction	8
Chapter One: <i>'The best seminaries of learning anywhere in Europe': Scotland's educational tradition</i>	14
Chapter Two: <i>A Curious Vacancy: The Missing History of Scottish Classics</i>	34
Chapter Three: <i>'Too much of a Scot.' The Chair of Greek at University of Edinburgh 1772-1882</i>	51
Chapter Four: <i>'What exactly do you do?' The 1826 Royal Commission of Inquiry into the State of the Scottish Universities</i>	73
Chapter Five: <i>'Six months clear.' The Chair of Humanity at the University of Glasgow 1831-1906</i>	121
Chapter Six: <i>'The active business of life.' Teaching Classics in the schools of Nineteenth Century Scotland</i>	152
Chapter Seven <i>'Under the shadow of the crown.' Aberdeen and the classics</i>	219
Chapter Eight: <i>'On not knowing Greek.' Women and the classics in Scotland</i>	259
Conclusion	293
Appendix 1: Scottish Chairs of Greek and Humanity	298
Appendix 2: Extracts of Interview with Dr George Davie, April 25 th 2001	299
Bibliography	301

Maps and Tables

1 (a) Map 1 Distribution of Lowland Schools before 1633 and key	25
4 (a) Parochial Schools Survey 1826	76
4 (b) 1826 Classical Curriculum: Class Sizes and Lecturing Hours	94
4 (c) 1826 Classical Curriculum: Reading Lists, Humanity	95
4 (d) 1826 Classical Curriculum: Reading Lists, Greek	96
5 (a) Age of Glasgow Students, Humanity 1876	134
5 (b) Session 1886-1887 University of Glasgow Junior Greek Class	136
5 (c) Junior Greek Class, Glasgow February 1889.	138
5 (d) Part-time Students Glasgow Junior Humanity Class 1876	142
5 (e) Part-time Students Glasgow Senior Humanity class 1876	144
6 (a) Scottish Burgh Schools and the Classics 1866-1867.	165
6 (b) Scottish Leaving Certificate. Examination Presentations: Ancient and Modern Languages 1888-1914	200
6 (c) Scottish Leaving Certificate. Results 1888-1900 & 1903-1906.	201
7 (a) Bajan (Junior Class) Enrolment Aberdeen 1800-1859	222
7 (b) Map 2 Harrower's 1912 Map of the Greekless Areas of Scotland and key	247
7 (c) Ferguson Scholarship: 1861 Classics Set Texts	257
8 (a) Matriculation Figures: Arts Faculties of Scottish Universities 1892-1911	261
8 (b) Pass rates Aberdeen University Local Examination 1880-1911	264
8 (c) Glasgow Correspondence: Course Enrolments 1879-1890	267

8 (d) Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association: Class attendances 1867-1877	276
8 (e) Scottish Census figures 1801-1931	278
8 (f) Scottish Universities Matriculation Figures 1861-1879	279
8 (g) Ladies Literate in Arts: Statistics 1877-1931	281
8 (h) Ancient Languages (Scottish Schools) 1851	287
8 (i) Schools and Teachers 1872-1905	291
8 (j) Average Annual Salaries of Certified Teachers 1872-1918	292

They who realize the gravity of the task on which I am about to enter will not, I trust, think me too bold, if I say this...I hope to have with me in my work the good wishes of Glasgow; and I hope that the students who join my class will come to it with a manly desire to learn, and with the disposition to believe that I shall spare no pains in teaching them to the best of my power. Above all, both for them and for myself may there be help from a Source higher than the serene temples of Greek wisdom, better than its clearness, and greater in its strength.

Richard Claverhouse Jebb [Professor of Greek]

Inaugural Address Delivered to the University of Glasgow. November 4th 1875

Preface

The research which forms the basis of this thesis was only made possible by the grant of a fee-waiver from the Open University; in addition the University also supported my efforts by awarding funds from the Associate Lecturer Development Fund. The Classical Association of England and Wales and the Joint Committee of the Hellenic Society and Roman Society also kindly provided bursary-funding which made possible my attendance at their respective conferences. This work also owes a great debt to the patiently given help and expertise of the staff at the Special Collection Departments and Archives located at the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Aberdeen and Dundee. I would also like to acknowledge and give thanks for the expert advice given by the staff at the following institutions: the National Library of Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland, Ayrshire Archives, Edinburgh City Archives, the British Library, the Bodleian Library, the National Archives (Kew), the Mitchell Library (Glasgow), University of Cambridge Library, Fettes College, St Leonards School and Edinburgh Academy

I was very fortunate indeed to be supervised in this research by: Professor Lorna Hardwick, Director of the Research Project on the Reception of Greek Texts and Images in Modern Drama and Poetry at the Open University and Dr Christopher Stray, Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Classics at Swansea University.

Any errors or faults in this work are entirely and exclusively of my own devising.

Introduction

Scotland is bounded on the South by England, on the East by the rising sun, on the North by the orory-bory-Alice and on the West by Eternity

Nan Shepherd *Quarry Wood* (1928)

The aim of this thesis is to provide an analytical history of the teaching of the Classical languages in Scotland's universities and schools in the nineteenth century and to evaluate the status of classical learning in the wider, national community. The terminal dates are 1774 to 1904; from the election of Andrew Dalzel to the Chair of Greek at the University of Edinburgh to the retirement of George Ramsay from the Chair of Humanity at Glasgow. This was the period when the greatest number of Scottish students studied the ancient languages and when Latin and Greek enjoyed the greatest cultural prestige in Scotland. There has been, as yet, very little academic research on this aspect of the history of classics in Scotland. The catalyst for this work is the argument presented in 1961 by George Davie in his noted work *The Democratic Intellect: Scotland and Her Universities in the Nineteenth Century*. In this work Davie provides an ideological narrative for the radical changes that occurred in Scotland's universities in the Victorian period. His thesis that, during this period, 'Scottish higher education was... Reorganised in accordance with English ideals,' remains the subject of debate and controversy to this day.¹

Certainly even the most cursory examination of the Scottish university sector at the end of the eighteenth century and then again a century later would reveal profound differences in the management and the curriculum. In addition to which, there was in the same period a dramatic expansion of the university sector in England and Wales. Scotland, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had more universities than England, five as opposed to Oxford and Cambridge and these universities were open to all regardless of religion. A

¹ G. Davie, *The Democratic Intellect: Scotland and Her Universities in the Nineteenth Century*, paperback edition (Edinburgh, 1981), p. 7. For all future citations, unless otherwise stated, the place of publication is London.

much higher proportion of Scots attended university than in England² and Scottish students often matriculated at a very young age: David Hume entered the University of Edinburgh, in 1721-1722, as a ten year old³ as did William Thomson, a century later, at the University of Glasgow.⁴ The benches of the Scottish lecture halls also included men in their thirties and forties, gaining their university education in a piecemeal fashion and often earning the necessary funds, between times, by working as a parochial schoolmaster or as an assistant in such schools.

The number of bursaries available, particularly in the north east of Scotland, meant that, in theory, a man from the poorest background could complete an arts degree. The universities north of the Tweed were, apart from St Andrews, civic foundations and non-residential, which meant the fees could be kept low; three guineas per subject was the norm throughout the period under examination here. The tutorial system was unknown and professors were expected to give prelections [i.e. lectures] to very large classes, often consisting of more than 100 students in any of the main subjects. The Arts Faculty course was generalist, covering the six canonical subjects: Humanity, Greek, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Logic and Moral Philosophy. By 1910 much had changed: there had been a dramatic expansion in the number of English and Welsh universities and university colleges affiliated to some older institution; instead of two universities south of the Tweed there were by 1910 fourteen such bodies.⁵ The changes that took place in Scotland, at the same period, included: the overhaul of university governance by the creation of a new supreme ruling body, the University Court; the fusion of the two Aberdeen colleges in 1860; the recognition by the universities of the new national qualification the Scottish Leaving Certificate; and finally the development and promotion of new specialised

² 'The universities of Scotland educate, in proportion to the size and wealth of the two countries, twenty times a larger number those of England educate,' J.G. Lockhart, *Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1819) p. 187.

³ M. A. Stewart, 'Hume's Intellectual Development 1711-1752', in *Impressions of Hume*. eds, M. Frasca-Spada, and P. J. E. Kail (Oxford, 2005), p.17.

⁴ Lord Kelvin entered the University of Glasgow in 1834.

⁵ Durham (1832), London (1836), Manchester (1851), Bristol (1876), Leeds (1874), Birmingham (1880), Liverpool (1881), Reading (1892), Sheffield (1897), Aberystwyth (1872), Cardiff (1884) and Bangor (1885) together with Oxbridge.

Honours degrees which largely displaced in public esteem the traditional Scottish generalist degree.

The most striking institutional difference in the nineteenth century, between Scotland and England was, however, in the organisation and curriculum of schools north of the Tweed. There was in Scotland in the 1800s, unlike in England, a national system of education under the unitary control of the Kirk which made annual inspections and was in overall charge of all teaching appointments. There were broadly two types of school open to Scotland's young: in the larger communities, there were the burgh schools (often medieval foundations) and in the smaller rural communities, parish schools. The fees, if charged at all, were usually very low. The parochial census conducted as part of the work of the 1826 Royal Commission revealed that there were, nationally, a total of some 900 parishes and that 60% of the schoolmasters had had some experience of university education. The same survey revealed that in these schools over 8,000 pupils were studying Latin and just over 2,000 Greek. It was in the schoolroom surely that the 'democratic intellect' was promoted and often made flesh in the shape of the dominie himself.

In 1970 Janet Adam Smith, in a celebrated essay, asked:

What is Scotland? A nation, a province, a lost kingdom; a culture, a history, a body of tradition; a bundle of sentiments, a state of mind; North Britain or Caledonia? Such are the questions which Scots have asked themselves, implicitly or openly ever since 1707.⁶

The Victorians' most popular historian Lord Macaulay was in little doubt as to the situation since the Union:

The administration of Scotland was in Scottish hands; for no Englishman had any motive to emigrate northward, and to contend with the shrewdest and most pertinacious of all races for what was to be scraped together in the poorest of all

⁶ J. A. Smith, 'Some Eighteenth Century Ideas of Scotland', in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement: Essays in Scottish History in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. N. T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison, (Edinburgh, 1970), p. 107

treasuries. Meanwhile Scottish adventurers poured southward and obtained in all the walks of life a prosperity which excited much envy, but which was in general the just reward of prudence and industry. Nevertheless Scotland by no means escaped the fate ordained for every country that is connected but not incorporated with another country of greater resources.⁷

A prominent Victorian Scottish voice Lewis Campbell, Professor of Greek at St Andrews and a product of Edinburgh Academy and Balliol, insisted, when giving evidence to the Royal Commission in 1876, that:

Scotland has long had, what is a desideratum in England, an open ladder for meritorious talent; and until the endowment of secondary education has been so organised that every lad of moderate abilities, however poor, shall be able, if he desires it, to have the training of the secondary school, the outer gate of the University...must be kept open: otherwise many meritorious persons, now actively and usefully engaged in learned professions, must have been excluded at the very outset⁸

The hope is that this thesis may perhaps be a very modest contribution to this debate on the nature of Scotland.

The sources consulted in this research included, as well as contemporary published accounts, primary source materials deposited in the Special Collection Departments of the Scottish universities in question and those housed in the National Library of Scotland and the National Archives of Scotland. This category of evidence includes diaries, class registers, private correspondence, lecture notes, internal private government memoranda and written notes of tours of inspection. In addition the opportunity to exploit oral testimony was taken, classicists now in retirement were interviewed in an attempt to gain some insight into the Scottish tradition which in their school days and undergraduate

⁷ T. B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*, Everyman Edition Vol.1 p.58.

⁸ *Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Universities of Scotland* Vol. 2: *Evidence Part 1* (1878) p. 835.

careers was still very much alive. Those interviewed included, apart from George Davie himself, were: Sir Kenneth Dover, the late Nan Dunbar, Mervyn Jones, Betty Knott-Sharpe and Professors Peter Walsh, David West, Keir Borthwick, Patrick Edwards and Douglas MacDowell. The hope was that as these distinguished figures had been educated in the 1930s or wartime, they could provide oral evidence concerning the Victorian or Edwardian classical education in Britain and Scotland.⁹ In the event the memories and the Scottish tradition turned out to be highly individual and very complex. The use of such interviews raises many research problems: the reliability and verification of anecdotal evidence from the mid-twentieth century, issues of confidentiality and also personal competence of the interviewer when questioning, for example, the former President of the British Academy.¹⁰

The distinct Scottish classical tradition was defended very eloquently by Professor W.D. Geddes in his opening lecture, in October 1869, to his Senior Greek class at Aberdeen:

It is not the final end of Scottish universities to send men to Oxford, or even to Cambridge or Berlin. It is, I apprehend, to subserve Scottish interests that they were founded, and they must do their duty according to the circumstances of Scotland, and not according to any external standard. I demur, therefore, and will continue to demur, to such a test, until the time come when our old and proud country passively submits to be considered a mere appanage of England, and when the Forth, and the Clyde, the Tay and the Don acknowledge themselves simple feeders of the Isis and the Cam.¹¹

⁹ It was very common in the Second World War for retired classicists to return to the classroom as younger men were called up.

¹⁰ After interviewing Sir Kenneth Dover, in January 2003, he wrote to me saying I had asked the 'wrong questions' and proceeded to list the questions I should have employed and the answers he would have given thereupon. A possible guide to the protocols involved in such interviews is provided by A. Burke and P. Innes in 'Interviews as a Methodology for Performance Research: (2) Academic Interviews-an Invitation for Discussion' (November, 2004) *Classical Reception in Drama and Poetry in English from c. 1970 to the Present*, Studies/Greek Plays/essays/burkeacademic [accessed January 2009]

¹¹ W. D. Geddes *Classical Education in the North of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1869) p. 8.

To adapt the ringing words of E. P. Thompson the aim of this thesis is to rescue the nineteenth century Scottish undergraduate, the parochial schoolmaster and the children he taught from the 'enormous condescension of posterity.'¹²

¹² E. P. Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), p. 12

Chapter One

The best seminaries of learning anywhere in Europe': Scotland's educational tradition

Scotland is the best educated country in the world.

Sir Henry Craik¹³

In Scotland, it seems to me, myth has played a far more important part in history than it has in England. Indeed, I believe the whole history of Scotland has been coloured by myth; and that myth, in Scotland, is never driven out by reality, or by reason, but lingers on until another myth has been discovered, or elaborated, to replace it.

Hugh Trevor-Roper¹⁴

The Historical Context

The history of Scottish students receiving a university education begins at some point in the middle of the twelfth century. The author of the definitive work¹⁵ on this subject, D. E. R. Watt, gives the names of some eleven hundred students who pursued their studies either in England or, much more commonly, mainland Europe before the foundation of Scotland's oldest university. The biographies provided by Watt include names with a European reputation such as John Dun Scotus (1266-1308) who taught at Oxford and Paris, but also much more obscure figures such as Thomas de Umfraville, son of the Earl of Angus, who was a scholar at Oxford in 1295,¹⁶ or Thomas de Dundee 'already called Master when mentioned at Bologna in 1286.'¹⁷ These European links were to become very evident with the foundation of Scotland's three pre-Reformation universities: St Andrews (1411), Glasgow (1451), and King's College, Aberdeen (1495).

¹³ Quoted in W.S. Bruce *Nor' East* (Aberdeen, 1929) p. 9

¹⁴ H. Trevor-Roper *The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History*. (New Haven, USA, 2008) p. xx

¹⁵ *A Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Graduates to A.D. 1410* (Oxford, 1977) p. ix

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 557

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 164

The foundation of St Andrews was largely the result of the political and ecclesiastical turmoil of the times: the War of Independence with England (1296-1350) meant a 'safe conduct', south of the Tweed, was essential before matriculating at Oxford or Cambridge, and the Great Schism (1378-1448) divided Catholic Europe. Despite the foundation of the Collegium Scotium (Scots College) at the University of Paris, in 1333¹⁸, the French capital was seen as unsafe place for young Scots, especially after the assassination of the Duke of Orleans in 1407. Thus in 1411 *inceptit stadium generale universitatis sancti Andree* (a programme of general study began at the University of St Andrews)¹⁹ was introduced. The early curriculum of the Faculty of Arts at St Andrews 'was derived ultimately from Paris. It was ordained *quod more Parisiensi libri consueti legantur ordinarie*'.²⁰ (according to the manner of Paris which were set down in the books of usual practice). St Andrews, unlike any other ancient Scottish university, developed as a collegiate institution: St Salvator's College was established in 1450, this was followed by St Leonard's College in 1512 and finally the theological college, St Mary's in 1537. St Andrews collegiate structure was the product of several forces: the attempt to replicate the structure of the University of Paris but more importantly, given the small population base in the burgh and its relative remoteness, it became essential to provide accommodation for students who came from outwith the vicinity. These factors were to limit very severely the numbers of students who matriculated and this in turn restricted, very considerably, the income of the professors.

The university's crucial role was in theological training, 'the main influence ... exerted through the faculty of arts upon the rank and file of the Scottish clerics is indicated by the

¹⁸ This college was closed in 1793 as part of the changes wrought by the Revolution.

¹⁹ H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages: A New Edition in Three Volumes* eds. F.M. Powicke and A. B. Emden, Vol. II (Oxford, 1936), p. 302. Despite Rashdall's confident assertion, and as with many medieval dates of foundation, absolute precision is not possible; for example, in the case of St Andrews' beginnings: 'In May 1410 a group of masters, mainly graduates of Paris, began teaching in the city. By February 1412, the society had ... obtain[ed] a charter of incorporation ... from the Bishop Henry Wardlaw. In August 1413 this charter was confirmed...by a series of Papal Bulls issued by Pope Benedict XIII'. R. G. Cant *The University of St Andrews: A Short History* (Edinburgh, 1946) p. 1

²⁰ Rashdall Vol. 2 p. 305

graduate lists'.²¹ As R. D. Anderson has pointed out one of the reasons why initially European universities were made accessible to poor student was to provide a constant pool of talent for recruitment to the clergy.²² The development of theological training in Scotland was important in terms of the classics because those studying for church were obliged to study Greek.²³ It must be said, however, that many classical scholars look with some disdain on the quality of the *Koine* (demotic) Greek of the *Septuagint* and the *New Testament*.²⁴

The University of Glasgow was, like St Andrews, the creation of the resident Bishop, William Turnbull. The Pope, Nicholas V, who issued the 1451 Bull which created Scotland's second university, was himself a graduate of Europe's oldest, Bologna. It is almost certainly for this reason a contemporary Scot described Glasgow as 'instar studii et universitatis Bononiensis'.²⁵ [following the curricula as at the University of Bologna]. Unlike St Andrews which regarded itself as a national university, Glasgow seems to have been created to meet the needs of Turnbull's diocese:

The geographical arrangement of the nations [their students' place of birth]- Clydesdale, Teviotdale, Albany, and Rothesay-indicates that...Glasgow looked mainly to the region which in 1492 the archiepiscopal province, and to the west generally, not without regard to Ireland.²⁶

King's College at Aberdeen like the other two medieval foundations was founded by a bishop, William Elphinstone Bishop of Aberdeen. He was a graduate of Paris and Orleans and it is clear that the new college followed, like St Andrews, the model of Paris

²¹ Ibid, p. 305. Rashdall points out, in a footnote, at the same point in his work that J. Maitland Anderson's *Early Records of the University of St Andrews: the Graduation Rolls 1413-1579* (Edinburgh, 1926) is 'the oldest graduation lists in Britain.'

²² R.D. Anderson *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914* (Oxford, 2008) p. 17

²³ For the development of the teaching of the *trilinguis* (Latin, Greek and Hebrew) at St Andrews see J. K. Cameron 'A Trilingual College for Scotland. The Founding of St Mary's College' In *Divers Manners. A St Mary's Miscellany*. ed. D. W. D. Shaw (St Andrews, 1990) pp.29-42.

²⁴ The same observation can be made about the Latin of the Vulgate.

²⁵ Rashdall Vol. II p. 312

²⁶ Ibid p. 314

rather than Bologna. This was to be the pattern not only in Scotland but throughout Europe:

Paris and Bologna are the two archetypal - it might almost be said the only original Universities: Paris supplied the model for the Universities of Masters, Bologna for the Universities of Students. Every later University from that day to this is in its developed form a more or less close imitation of these two types, though in some few cases the basis of the organisation may be independent.²⁷

It is also clear, from contemporary accounts, that a crucial reason for the foundation of King's College, in 1495, was to tackle the problem of the 'extreme ignorance' of the Highland clergy.²⁸

In all three of the medieval foundations, Scottish undergraduates would have followed the traditional medieval pattern studying the seven Liberal Arts: Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry and Astronomy before undertaking the three philosophies, Natural, Moral and Metaphysical. The choice then was for the most fortunate to devote themselves to one of three kinds of professional training: theological, legal or medical. All the course work would, of course be conducted in Latin:

The lectures were given in Latin. Before the student could profitably attend University lectures, he must have learned to read, write and understand such Latin as was used in the Schools. Latin it must be remembered, was not merely the language of the Lecture-room, but theoretically at least of ordinary student-life. The freshman must have been able to talk some Latin as well as understand it.... Conversational Latin must have been almost a necessity of life to the University student.²⁹

Thus in Scotland evolved a university system which met the widespread demand for undergraduate education, as the number of institutions founded indicated, but also dealt

²⁷ H. Rashdall *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages in Two Volumes*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1895) p.19

²⁸ Rashdall, Vol. II (1936) p. 312

²⁹ Rashdall, Vol. II (1895) p. 594

with the problem of a very frugal national economy: the large lecture hall with often more than a hundred students provided a more cost effective model than any tutorial arrangement and the fact that the professor retained the student fees made these posts an attractive proposition to such scholars. Added to this the Scottish university term was, up until the late nineteenth century, only six months long; for half the year the professor was able to pursue, if he was so inclined, his own academic researches.

As can be seen by consulting Table 6 (a) on page 161, *Scottish Burgh Schools and the Classics 1866-1867*, many of Scotland's burgh schools are of great antiquity, for example the schools at Ayr, Dundee and Dunfermline are thirteenth century foundations. Indeed in 1496 the first compulsory Education Act known to history was passed in Scotland:

The Act required 'all barons and freeholders of substance to put their eldest sons and heirs to the sculis fra thai be aucht or nyne years of age, and to remane at the grammer sculis quhill thai be competentlie foundit, and have perfite Latyne'.

Thereafter they were to remain for three years at the schools of art and 'jure.' The object of the Act was that 'justice may reign universally throughout the realm, and those who are sheriffs or judges may have knowledge to do justice, so that the poor should have no need to see our sovereign lord's principal auditors for every little injury'.³⁰

The Act imposed a penalty for an offence under the Act of £20 but as the historian of this legislation notes rather wryly notes 'no record of its enforcement has come down to us.'³¹ What this legislation does demonstrate is how Latin was seen as being of central importance in late medieval Scottish education by the government of the nation.

The Reformation came to Scotland, in 1560, later than any other European nation and because of this the changes imposed on Scottish society were more radical and more rapid than elsewhere. As the key to Map 1, *Distribution of Lowland Schools before 1633* [pages 26-27], reveals many Scottish schools were of post-Reformation, early sixteenth century

³⁰ A. Morgan, *Rise and Progress of Scottish Education* (Edinburgh, 1927) p. 35

³¹ Ibid

foundation.³² In terms of the development of Scottish education, and in particular the teaching of the classics, three figures are of supreme importance: ‘the Scots Melanchthon’ Andrew Melville; George Buchanan; and the leader of Reformation movement, John Knox. The first was largely responsible for the introduction of Renaissance learning into the Scottish university curriculum; Buchanan came to represent to future generations the perfect synthesis between classical learning and the precepts of Presbyterianism whilst Knox is credited with the creation of national schools system. Andrew Melville was educated at Montrose Academy, where he learnt Greek, and afterwards enrolled at St Mary’s College, St Andrews, where his special study was Aristotle, in Greek and not the usual Latin translation. He graduated in 1563 and the proceeded to the University of Paris and from there went to the Academy of Geneva where he ‘mastered additional oriental languages’.³³ In 1574 he returned to Scotland and accepted the post of Principal at the then derelict Glasgow University’.³⁴ At Glasgow Melville displayed the range of his scholarship by teaching classes in

Latin and Greek, philosophy, mathematics, geography, physics, history, Hebrew, Aramaic and theology. His arrival caused such a rush of students that ‘the rooms were scarce able to receive them’.³⁵

His reforms of the curriculum formed the basis of the *Nova Erectio* which was ‘the new charter of the university [which] influenced the development of the universities throughout Scotland’.³⁶ Melville was also the driving force behind the reform of King’s College, Aberdeen and the St Andrews colleges. At the University of Paris Melville would have come into contact with his compatriot George Buchanan whom he described as his ‘praeceptor’³⁷ [master] and it seems the older man did much to promote Melville’s career.

³² 306 in total.

³³ M. .A. Stewart, ‘Andrew Melville’ *Dictionary of British Classicists* (Bristol, 2004) Vol. 2, p. 642

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ R. Graham *John Knox, Democrat* (2001) p. 333

³⁶ Stewart (2004) p. 642

³⁷ Ibid

Buchanan's greatest achievement as a classical scholar was his translation into metrical Latin, in 1576, of the *Psalms*. The work was:

quite unusually successful. Investigation has so far discovered over a hundred editions of the paraphrases on their own or with certain texts by Buchanan, and this number does not take into account the collected editions of the *Poemata*.³⁸

This translation of the Psalms, exploiting in all thirty different Latin meters made them excellent teaching materials, as they could be sung in the school room. The fame of this worked extended beyond the countries of Reformation scholars and into Catholic Europe:

In the counties of the Counter-reformation expression of admiration is more muted, though with the passage of time, the paraphrases will enjoy considerable favour; though the Calvinist is reproved, the poet is accepted ... Fairly early on, there is a record of a copy... finding its way into the library of the University of Padua.³⁹

The fact that Buchanan combined the roles not just of diplomat, historian of Scotland, leading light of the Scottish Reformation but also a classical scholar with a European reputation ensured that for 300 years his version of the Psalms occupied a pre-eminent place in the Latin curriculum of the nation's schools: the most senior Latin class would invariably study his paraphrases of the Psalms alongside the classical authors.⁴⁰ The comments made in the 1780s by Professor Andrew Dalziel to his Edinburgh second year Greek class gave a good example of this national pride at work:

You are well acquainted with the merit of Buchanan and with the reputation he has justly acquired... He was considered in foreign nations as one of the most eminent of classical scholars...and his version of the Psalms of David, together with his other poetical productions, procured him the honourable appellation of 'Poetarum sui saeculi facile princeps' [unquestionably the chief of poets in his time] which

³⁸ I. D. McFarlane *Buchanan* (1981) p. 247

³⁹ *Ibid* p. 273

⁴⁰ The Presbyterian ban on singing in Church anything other than the word of God meant that up until 1860, when the ban was slightly eased, the *Psalms* alone were sung. A similar ban applied to all musical instruments.

was allowed him by the universal suffrage of the learned and which was inscribed on the early editions of his poems that issued from the press of the Stephensens at Paris.⁴¹

The most famous member of this triumvirate is John Knox whose importance, in terms of Scottish classical schooling, rests on the 1560 *First Book of Discipline*. This work not only sets out the organisation of the Presbyterian Church but also provides a blue print for the nation's education system. A compulsory national system both for rich and poor children was to be introduced and this was to be provided by three types of school:

Upland or rural schools... In the larger villages and smaller towns a grammar school... [and in] every important town, especially in the ten towns which were named as the seats of Protestant bishops (Kirkwall, Fortrose, Argyll, Old Aberdeen, Brechin, St Andrews, Edinburgh, Jedburgh, Glasgow and Dumfries) was to be the seat of a high school.⁴²

In the larger schools, where the students would study to the age of sixteen, the syllabus was to be taught by a master who could teach Latin, grammar as well as the catechism and also the Arts, at least Logic and Rhetoric, together with the Tongues [Greek and Hebrew] be read by sufficient Masters for whom honest stipends must be appointed: as also provision for those that be poor, and not able by themselves, nor by their friends, to be sustained at letters, such as come from landward [the rural areas].⁴³

The *Book of Discipline* also ordained a number of bursaries to be provided at Scotland's, then, three universities: 72 at St Andrews and 48 each at Glasgow and Aberdeen. A noted Victorian biographer of Knox, Hume Brown, was absolute: the *First Book of Discipline* is 'the most important document in Scottish history'; it has to be said, however, that the *First Book of Discipline* represented an ideal and vision rather than a reality that could be

⁴¹ A. Dalzel *Substance of Lectures on the Ancient Greeks and the Revival of Greek Learning in Europe* (Edinburgh, 1821), Vol. 2, Lecture XXXVII, pp. 453-454

⁴² Morgan (1927), p. 50

⁴³ Graham (2001), p. 189

rapidly achieved.⁴⁴ To this day historians fall into one of two camps about the significance of *The Book of Discipline*, enthusiasts or sceptics:

Recent research has concentrated on patiently establishing the facts about schooling and literacy, social phenomena which have distinct histories. The two scholars who have contributed most to this work, Withrington and Houston, have not always agreed. Withrington takes an optimistic view of the extent of school provision in the early modern period, pushing back the date by which an effective system was in place, while Huston challenges accepted views of Scotland's superior literacy and stresses the lateness of universal literacy.⁴⁵

The task facing the Scottish Protestant Reformers, in terms of the universities, was clear:

In proportion to its population Scotland was perhaps better supplied with universities than any other country in Europe; yet none of the three, St Andrews, Glasgow, or Aberdeen was in anything like a desirable state of efficiency⁴⁶

The most visible and immediate post-Reformation development was the creation of two new universities, one in the capital and the other, Marischal College, in Aberdeen. In Edinburgh the new university was, uniquely, put under the direct control of the Corporation:

The appointment of staff, the regulations regarding the course of study to be followed, and the conditions for attaining degrees were made not by the University authorities, as might have been expected, but by the Town Council. Their power to do so was confirmed by an Act of Ratification of the Charter in 1621 which gives, grants and disposes to the Provost, Bailies, Council 'and their successors Patrons of the of the said College, and of the Rectors, Regents, Bursars and

⁴⁴ P. Hume Brown *John Knox A Biography in Two Volumes* (1895), Vol. II, p. 148

⁴⁵ R. D. Anderson *Scottish Education since the Reformation* (Dundee, 1997), pp. 4-5

⁴⁶ Brown (1895), Vol. II, p. 137

Students within the same, all liberties, freedoms, immunities, and privileges appertaining to a free College'. The University of Edinburgh was thus not an independent institution like the three other older Universities, but as to the curriculum, and even the appointment and dismissal of professors was subject to the municipality.⁴⁷

This management arrangement was to be a regular source of friction and indeed litigation for the next three centuries. Marischal College was founded in 1593, eleven years after Edinburgh was granted its Royal Charter, and was set up to meet the local 'deficiency of literary and Christian education'.⁴⁸ The College was it seems established to be seen as a true child of the Reformation and doubts were to linger for another two centuries about the devotion of King's College to the cause of Knox and Melville.⁴⁹

Thus by the end of the sixteenth century Scotland's education system was firmly under the control of the Kirk: in the country's schools the local Presbytery was responsible for the appointment of schoolmasters and also conducted the annual inspection of pupils; in the universities new professorial appointments were obliged to subscribe to the tenets of the established church which after 1646 meant accepting the Westminster Confession as a statement of one's beliefs.⁵⁰ The church's control of the universities was further reinforced by the fact that until the appointment of Sir David Brewster in 1838, at St Andrews, the Principals of Scotland's universities were Presbyterian divines.

Despite the political and ecclesiastical turmoil of seventeenth century Scotland, 'the killing times', there is much evidence to suggest the development of the nation's school system.

As the key to Map 1 shows there were some 110 schools that offered Latin as subject. The

⁴⁷ Morgan (1927), p. 133

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 134

⁴⁹ A similar situation prevail ecclesiastically in Edinburgh: St Giles Cathedral was seen as perhaps tainted having been created by the old dispensation, whereas Greyfriars Kirk, completed in 1620, was regarded as the true home of Presbyterian Scotland: it was here that Buchanan, Ruddiman and Dalziel were buried, and it was here too that, in 1638, the National Covenant was signed.

⁵⁰ This did not prevent the noted Episcopalian Daniel Sandford and the rationalist Gilbert Murray from being appointed to the Chair of Greek at Glasgow.

government made five attempts to regularise the appointment of teachers and the subjects he taught; the most important was the 1696 the Act for Settling of Schools:

That there be a School settled and established and a Schoolmaster appointed in every parish not already provided by advice of the Heritors and Minister of the parish.⁵¹

The most significant act of the Kirk concerning the Classics was the edict issued by the General Assembly in 1645 which, to all intents and purposes, banned the teaching of Greek in the nation's schools and this ban was further reinforced by decree, issued in 1672, from the Lords of the Privy Council prohibiting the teaching of Greek or philosophy by unauthorised tutors, as this would be 'contrary to the laws of the kingdom.'⁵² The effect of these actions was to give the universities virtually the monopoly in teaching Greek but to reduce the standard of Greek taught at the five colleges to, in most cases, a very elementary level. The reason for the ban may have been theological as well as preserving the salaries of professors; in the time of the Covenant it was perhaps seen as far too dangerous an act to allow lay people to provide their own exegesis on the New Testament.⁵³

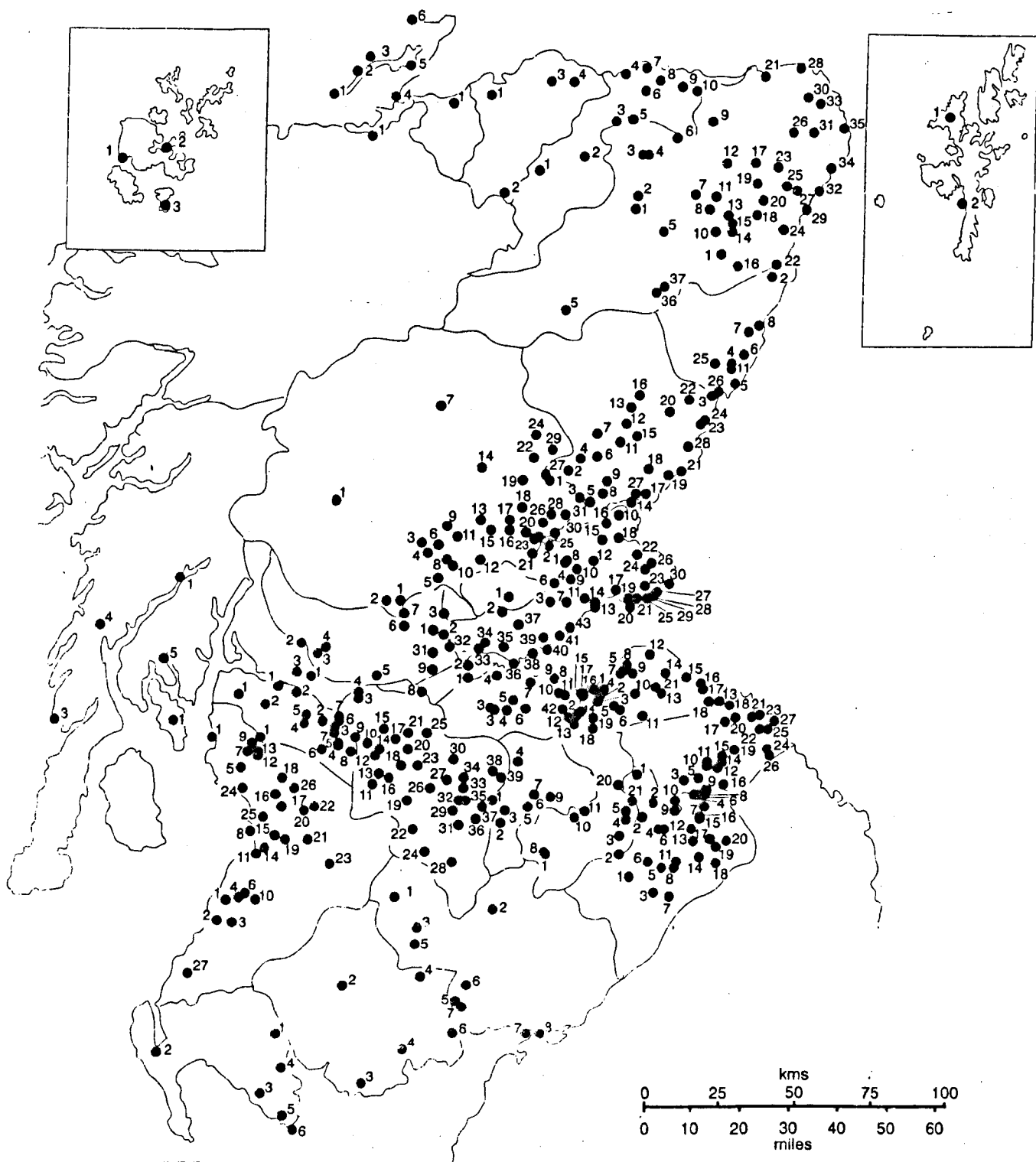
⁵¹ W. Boyd *Education in Ayr through Seven Centuries* (1961) p. 223

⁵² J. Strong *A History of Secondary Education in Scotland* (Oxford, 1909) p. 156

⁵³ The ban was not particularly effective and was successfully challenged by the Royal High School of Edinburgh in the 1790s

Map 1: Distribution of Lowland Schools before 1633

Source: *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707* eds. P. G. B McNeil and H.L. MacQueen (Edinburgh, The Scottish Medievalists and Department of Geography University of Edinburgh, 1986) p. 437



Schools

•	School
1637	Date first recorded
C	Continued after the Reformation
nd	No date
P	Parish
RB	Royal burgh
G	Grammar school
V	Vernacular school
F	Fencing school
D	Dutch school
Fr	French school
SL	Song Latin school
H	Hospital school
W	Woman's school
Wr	Writing, school

Aberdeen

1. Auld Auchindoir 1633 P L
2. Rhynie 1626 P L
3. Dumbennan (Dunbennan) 1631 P
4. Huntly 1613 L
5. Alford 1618 P
6. Forgue 1628 P L
7. Rayne 1602 P L
8. Chapel of Garioch >1631 PL
9. Turriff 1586 P L
10. Kemnay 1628 P
11. Pittodrie 1633 L
12. Fyvie 1633 PL
13. Inverurie 1606 P(RB) G
14. Kintore 1619 P(RB)
15. Kinkell 1602 P
16. Carnie 1630 P
17. Methlick 1614 P
18. Straloch 1621
19. Tarves 1621 P
20. Udney 1614 P
21. Aberdour 1574, 1563 P
22. Aberdeen C P(RB) G(2) S(2)
23. Drumwhindle 1617
24. Belhelvie 1628 P L
25. Eilon 1602 P L S Wr
26. Deer nd P
27. Logie Buchan 1610 P
28. Fraserburgh 1601 P G
29. Newburgh 1605
30. Lonmay 1613 P
31. Longside 1626 P L S
32. Slains 1608 P
33. Crimond 1601 P
34. Cruden 1606 P
35. Peterhead 1597 P L
36. Birse 1629 P L
37. Kincardine O'Neil 1625 P L

Angus

1. Kettins > 1602 P L
2. Newtyle 1622 P L
3. Liff 1626 P
4. Nevay 1623 P
5. Dundee C P(RB) G S
6. Glamis >1610
7. Kirriemuir 1598 PL
8. Balmuir Mill 1619
9. Tealing 1609 P
10. Mains 1613 P
11. Forfar 1576 P(RB) L
12. Oathlaw 1628 PL
11. Fern 1619 P L
14. Monifeith 1599 P L
15. Rescobie 1610 P
16. Menmuir 1628 PM
17. Barry 1598 P L
18. Carmyllie 1574 L
19. Arbirlot 1602 P L
20. Brechin nd P(RB)
21. Arbroath 1620 P(RB) L
22. Logie Montrose (now Logie Pert) nd P Fr K
23. Craig 1632
24. Montrose 1566 P(RB) G S
25. Fordoun 1609 P
26. Lauriston 1630 L
27. Ardestie 1631

28. Inverkeilor 1611 P L

Argyll

1. Inveraray 1619 P(RB) G
2. Kilmeny 1622 P
3. Kilberry 1617 P L
4. Kilbrannoch Glassary 1629 P L
5. Lochhead 1622

Ayr

1. Largs 1595 P L
2. Blair (Castle) 1625
3. Dailly 1630 P
4. Maybole 1602 P L
5. Dalry 1625 P L
6. Drumellan 1631
7. Kilbride 1617 P
8. Irvine 1586 P(RB) G
9. Ladyland 1600
10. Kirkmichael 1630 P
11. Ayr C P(RB) G S Wr
12. Beith 1617 P
13. Hessilhead 1604
14. St Quivox 1621
15. West Kilbride 1603 P L
16. Kilmaurs 1614 P
17. Kilmarnock 1591 PG
18. Stewarton > 1620 P L
19. Tarbolton 1601 P L
20. Galston 1627 P
21. Mauchline 1622 P L
22. Newmilns 1601 P L P
23. Cumnock 1599 P L
24. Kilwinning 1605 P L
25. Dundonald 1606 P
26. Fenwick 1638
27. Colmonell 1630 P L

Banff

1. Inveravon 1633 P L
2. Mortlach 1228 P L
3. Keith 1620 P L
4. Rathven 1600 P
5. Grange 1631 PL
6. Ordens 1633
7. Cullen C P(RB) G
8. Fordyce 1624 P L
9. Baldavie 1629
10. Alvah 1626 P L
11. Banff C P(RB)

Berwick

1. Lauder >1621 P(RB) L
2. Earlston 1607
3. Rumbletonlaw 1622 L
4. Hume 1612 P
5. Greenlaw >1633 P
6. Kennetsidehead 1629
7. Ednam 1560? P L
8. Haddington 1622
9. Hardacres 1620
10. Polwarth 1586 PL
11. Chiocelee 1609
12. Fogo 1632
13. Cockburnspath 1619 P L
14. Langton 1600 P L
15. Duns 1600 P
16. Bughrig 1605
17. Butterdean 1592?
18. Old Cambus 1620
19. Edrom 1630 P
20. West Renton 1618 P
21. Chirnside > 1629
22. East Reston 1993
23. Coldingham 1587 P
24. Foulden 1619 P
25. Ayton 1583 P
26. Paxton 1619
27. Eyemouth 1594 L

Bute

1. Rothesay 1619

Caithness

1. Thurso 1628 P L
2. Wick 1617 P
3. Dornoch 1588 P(RB) G

Clackmannan

1. Alloa P
2. Clackmannan 1590 P G
3. Tillicoultry 1627 P

Dunbarton

1. Dunbarton 1576 P(RB) G S
2. Kilpatrick 1622 P L
3. Lenzie 1625 P
4. Kirkintilloch nd P L

Dumfries

1. Sanquhar 1598 P(RB) L
2. Moffat 1612 P G
3. Drumlanrig 1619
4. Dunscore 1629 P L
5. Dumfries C P(RB) G
6. Tinwald 1627 P
7. Annan 1628 P(RB) L
8. Dornock 1633 P

East Lothian

1. Prestonpans 1591 PG (3 tongues)
2. Elphinstone 1624 L
3. Tranent 1594 P
4. Seton 1633 P
5. Pencaltland 1613 P
6. Saltoun 1589 P
7. Aberlady 1615 P
8. Gullane 1598 P
9. Drem 1629 P
10. Haddington C P(RB) G S V W
11. Bothans 1606 P
12. North Berwick 1581 P(RB)
13. Whittinghame 1620 P
14. Tynninghame 1600 P L
15. Dunbar 1564 PGV
16. East Barns 1612
17. Innerwick 1630 P
18. Oldhamstocks > 1577 P L

Fife

1. Abdie 1624 P L
2. Newburgh 1597 P(RB) G
3. Leslie 1623 P
4. Falkland 1589 P(RB) G
5. Largo 1623 P L
6. Colleslie 1631 P
7. Markinch >1622 PL
8. Monimall 1632 P
9. Kingskettle 1571 P L
10. Auchtermuchty 1570 P(RB) L
11. Kennoway 1575 P L
12. Cupar 1564 P(RB) G
13. Leven >1633 L
14. Scoonie 1626 P
15. Logie 1630 PL
16. Forgan 1599 (RB) G
17. Newburn 1630P
18. Leuchars 1594 P L
19. Kilconquhar 1594 P
20. Elie 1600 P
21. Abercrombie 1617 P L
22. St Andrews C P(RB) G(4) H S(20)V
23. Carnbee 1613 PL
24. Dunino 1631 PL
25. Pittenweem 1592 P G
26. Kinglassie 1630 P
27. Anstruther Easter 1624 (RB) L
28. Anstruther Wester 1595 (RB) L
29. Kilrenny 1625 P(RB) L
30. Crail C P(RB) G
31. Culross 1585 P(RB) G
32. Kincardine >1618
33. Torryburn 1620 P

Schools

34. Carnock 1628 P L
35. Dunfermline C P (RB) G S W
Wr
36. Inverkeithing C P (RB) G
37. Keltiehaugh 1627 Mixed
38. Aderdour >1629 P L
39. Auchtertool 1631 PL
40. Burntisland 1587 P (RB) G
41. Kirkcaldy nd P (RB) G
42. Kinghorn 1575 P (RB) G
43. Dysart 1579 P (RB) G

Inverness

1. Inverness C P (RB) G

Kincardine

1. Bervie 1614 P (RB) L
2. Banchory Devenick 1621 P L
3. Ecclesgreig 1620 P L
4. Arbuthnott
5. Benholm >1619 P L
6. Chapel of Barras 1623
7. Fetteresso 1628 P L
8. Urie 1618

Kinross

1. Kinross 1615 P
2. Cleish 1633 P

Kirkcudbright

1. Minnigaff 1622 P
2. Dairy (St John's Clachan) > 1626
P (RB)
3. Kirkcudbright 1577 P (RB) G W
4. Buittle 1631 P
5. Grennan 1631
6. New Abbey 1628 P
7. Craigend 1630

Lanark

1. Bothwell 1612 P
2. Govan 1614 P
3. Rutherglen 1590 P (RB) G
4. Peel 1618 L
5. Carmunnock 21607 P
6. Gorbal 1633
7. Glasgow C P (RB) G S V (1+)
8. East Kilbride 1591 P L
9. Cambuslang 1598 P
10. Blantyre 1611 P
11. Strathaven 1628 P L
12. Earnock 1619
13. Glassford 1620 P
14. Hamilton 1570 P (RB) G S
15. Shirrel 1624
16. Stonehouse 1630 P
17. Carfin 1627
18. Dalserf 1619 P
19. Lesmahagow 1623 PL
20. Cambusnethan 1627 P
21. Meikie Hareshaw 1605
22. Douglas >1633 P
23. Carluke 1620 P L
24. Crawfordjohn 1599 P L
25. Shotts 1629 P
26. Lanark nd P (RB) G S
27. Carstairs 1619 P
28. Crawfordjohn 1630 P
29. Wiston 1612
30. Stobwood 1620
31. Lamington > 1622 P L
32. Covington 1620 P
33. Liberton 1631 P
34. Carnwath 1617 P L
35. Quothquan 163
36. Coulter 1620 P
37. Biggar 1808 P
38. Dunsyre 1628 P
39. Dolphinton 1624 P L

Midlothian

1. Canongate C P G
2. Newbattle 1617 P L S
3. Midcalder >1611 P L
4. Kirknewton 1627 P
5. Ratho 1599 P
6. Liberton 1598 P
7. Cramond 1599 P L
8. Leith (South) 1598 P
9. Leith 1598 P G S
10. Edinburgh C P (RB) D Fe Fr G
S V (3+) Wr
11. Duddingston 1630 P
12. Lasswade 1615 PL
13. Cockpen 1602 P
14. Dalkeith 1591 PG
15. Fisharrow >1615
16. Inveresk >1615 P
17. Musselburgh 1580 (part of
Inveresk) G S
18. Crichton 1627 P
19. Cranston 1631 P
20. Stow 1628 P
21. Hailes 1599 P (RB) G S

Moray

1. Forres 1582 P (RB) G
2. Cromdale 1627 P L
3. Elgin CP (RB) G S
4. Urquhart > 1631 P

Nairn

1. Auldearn 1582 P (RB) G

Orkney

1. Stromness 1630 P
2. Kirkwall C P (RB) G S
3. South Ronaldsay 1627 P

Peebles

1. Skirling 1632 P
2. Glenholm 1625 P
3. Broughton 1630 P
4. West Linton 1602 P
5. Stobo 1604 P
6. Brig of Lyne 1614
7. Lyne 1600
8. Henderland 1633
9. Peebles C P (RB) GS
10. Traquhair 1617 PL
11. Bold (=West Bold?) 1621

Perth

1. Killin 1627 P
2. Doune 1632 P
3. Balloch 1618
4. Muthill 1583 P
5. Blackford 1613 P (see also
Strageath)
6. Strageath 1583 P L
7. Bonskeld 1621
8. Tullibardine 1599 P
9. Fowls Wester 1616 P L
10. Auchterarder 1610 P
11. Madderty 1632 P
12. Dunning 1610 P
13. Methven 1632 P L
14. Dunkeld C P (RB) G
15. Tibbermore 1611 P
16. Perth C P (RB) G S
17. Scone 1610 P L
18. St Martins > 1629 P L
19. Kinclaven 1609 P L
20. Kinfauns 1613 P
21. Abermethy 1632 P L
22. Rattray 1606 P L
23. St Madoes 1595 P
24. Tullymurchie 1603 L
25. Chapelhill 1622
26. Kilspindie 1614 P
27. Coupar Angus (formerly in
Angus) 1581 PG
28. Kinnaird 1613 P L

29. Alyth 1607 P
30. Erroll >1626 P L
31. Inchture 1613 P

Renfrew.

1. Lochwinnoch 1622 P
2. Kilmacoll 1623 P
3. Inchinnan 1623 P L
4. Paisley C P G S V W
5. Renfrew 1595 P (RB) L
6. Mearns (now Mearnskirk) 1605
P
7. Cathcart 1603 P

Ross and Cromarty

1. Dingwall 1569 P (RB)
2. Kiltarn 1631 P L S
3. Ainess 1628 P L
4. Ross Chanonry nd P (RB) G
5. Cromarty 1580 P (RB) G
6. Tain 1630 P (RB) G S (1595)

Roxburgh

1. Hawick 1592 P G
2. Melrose 1608 P L
3. Hobbkirk 1619 P
4. Lessudden 1631 P
5. Bedrule 1618
6. Maxton 1611 P
7. Southdean 1620 P
8. Hundalee 1608
9. Smailholm 1622 P
10. Mellerstain 1605
11. Jedburgh 1569 P (RB)
12. Roxburgh 1631 P (RB)
13. Eckford 1608 P
14. Samierson >1619
15. Maxwellheugh 1628
16. Kelso 1585 PL (G?)
17. Caverton 1617
18. Hownam 1609 P
19. Morebattle 1628 P L
20. Primsie Mill 1617
21. Colmslie 1622

Selkirk

1. Littlehope 1619
2. Ashkirk 1618 P
3. Selkirk 1608 P (RB) G
4. Boleside 1617 P
5. Galashiels >1630 P
6. Minto 1616 P

Shetland

1. Scalloway 1612 P L
2. Dore 1582

Stirling

1. Dunblane C P (RB) G
2. Drymen 1624 P
3. Killearn 1630 P L
4. Branshogle 1620
5. Kilsyth 1590 P
6. Stirling C P (RB) G S V (1 +)
7. Logie 1627 P G late V
8. Slamannan 1632 P
9. Falkirk 1594 P

West Lothian

1. Linnithgow 1575 P (RB)
2. Bo'ness 1630 L
3. Livingston 1633 P
4. Abercorn 1620 P
5. Luffness 1626 P

Wigtown

1. Glenluce 1632 P
2. Stranraer 1614 P (RB)
3. Longcastle 1631 P
4. Wigtown 1583 P (RB) G
5. Whithorn 1628 P (RB)
6. Bysbie 1631

In his authoritative essay on eighteenth century schooling Donald Withrington shows that, as early as 1700, there was considerable dissatisfaction in some Scottish quarters at the traditional curriculum taught in schools and universities. He details an attack made by a Glasgow minister, William Thom of Govan, in 1762, on the quality a university education:

Thom launches out with a tirade against the waste of a session spent in Glasgow on logic and metaphysics: he adds that if the college regulations had allowed students to go straight from Latin and Greek to ethics then many more parents would have sent their sons to the university; but it was the professors insisted that students passed through the needless subtleties of the logic class in the second year. He repeats an old complaint in saying that there is little value to 'a commercial people' in what the university invited the children to study in its standard curriculum. The education that ought to have been available should have included practical mathematics, history in general and the history of Britain and her continental neighbours in particular, natural history, geography, the theory of commerce, and a course in 'practical morality'.⁵⁴

What Withrington also notes in this essay is that schools beyond the orbit of a local university often had a more 'modern' curriculum:

We have seen that in the earlier 18th century changes which reflected at least some of these ideas were being implemented in the smaller burghs: there the range of subjects which was offered in public schools was being extended. In contrast, however, the public grammar schools of the largest towns still retained their strict curriculum.⁵⁵

Indeed one of the special attractions in the founding of Perth Academy 'for Arts and sciences', Scotland's first such modern school with a 'commercial' curriculum, established

⁵⁴ 'Education and Society in the Eighteenth Century' in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement*, eds. N. T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh University Press, 1996) p. 181

⁵⁵ *ibid* p.174

in 1761, was the town's remoteness from the Scottish universities and therefore it would attract middle-class families to come, with their sons, and live in the region far away from the possible moral corruption of the urban, non-residential universities. However care must be exercised here, as the case of Ayr Academy discussed in Chapter Six shows, for there were definite attempts to accommodate the old classical curriculum and the new commercial subjects under one roof. The Classics enjoyed immense prestige not least due to the fact that in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the rector of the burgh school was invariable a classicist.

The early eighteenth century saw a flowering of publishing in Scotland and perhaps the most widely circulated Latin grammar of the time appeared in 1714, Thomas Ruddiman's *Rudiments of the Latin Tongue*. This textbook, which has a fair claim to be one of the most successful ever published, it remained in print in one guise or another for 150 years.⁵⁶ Its popularity was due to its compact size, cost and brevity, twenty pages in all. It was often bound with the *Rudimenta Pietatis* (Rudiments of Piety): the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Decalogue and extracts from the Shorter Catechism, all printed in Latin. There was clearly a close link between the catechetical style used in teaching Latin grammar and the way in which generations of Scottish children learnt the Shorter Catechism by heart.⁵⁷ Ruddiman's other major contribution to Scottish classical learning was to publish, in 1715, a two volume edition of the complete works of George Buchanan. This work, the *Opera Omnia*, described by his biographer as an act of 'patriotic editing', consisted of 'two enormous folios [which] represent[ed] probably the weightiest piece of literary editing ever undertaken in Scotland'.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ The best description of the textbook market in Scotland before Ruddiman is to be found in two papers given by the Scottish antiquarian David Murray to the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow: 'Some Early Grammars and Schoolbooks in use in Scotland more particularly those printed at or relating to Glasgow', *Proceedings of the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow* Part One Vol. 36 (1904-1905) and Part 2 Vol. 37 (1905-1906).

⁵⁷ This was the cornerstone of the annual inspection of schoolchildren by the local Presbytery.

⁵⁸ D. Duncan *Thomas Ruddiman: A Study in Scottish Scholarship of the Early Eighteenth Century*. (Edinburgh, 1965) p. 62

The revival in publishing scholarly editions of classical texts was continued with the establishment in Glasgow, in 1741, of the Foulis Press as Printer to the University; the firm produced admired editions of Euclid, Archimedes, also the 'immaculate' Horace of 1744. Their most famous production was the 'folio' Homer (1756-1758). This edition set new standards in the casting of Greek type and proof reading in that language.⁵⁹

As L. J. Saunders noted, Scottish schools in the eighteenth century were ignored by the legislature:

During the political indifference of the 18th century, the educational establishment had been untouched. No education act was passed for more than a century after 1696; no provision had been made to meet changing conditions.⁶⁰

A similar situation prevailed in the university sector, with the notable exception of St Andrews: in 1747 Parliament passed a uniting Act merging the Colleges of St Salvator and St Leonard to form the United College of St Andrews. This situation had been brought about by the catastrophic fall in student numbers and therefore in professor's salaries, 'even the lethargic masterswere compelled to consider what might be done to save the university from utter ruin'.⁶¹ After the Act of Union Scottish Universities, again with the exception of St Andrews, played a leading role in the Enlightenment; nearly all the leading figures of this movement, with the notable exception of David Hume, held professorial appointments. If Europe came to Scotland, the Scots also kept up their traditional links with Europe:

Three gateways to the Continent imported persons as well as commodities merchants, and craftsmen, students and professors of all faculties, pastors, preachers, theologians. The Atlantic gateway at Bordeaux admitted a sufficiently large number of staunch Calvinists; they reinforced the Huguenot minority, maintained spiritually and intellectually the best traditions of the

⁵⁹ See G. H. Whitaker *Dictionary of British Classicists* Vol. 1 (Bristol, 2004) pp. 330-331

⁶⁰ L. J. Saunders *Scottish Democracy 1815-1840: The Social and Intellectual Background*. (Edinburgh, 1850) p. 245

⁶¹ R. G. Cant *The University of St Andrews: A Short History* (Edinburgh, 1946) p. 87

‘Auld Alliance’. Campvere off the Dutch coast, headquarters of the Scottish ‘Staple’, was the North Sea gateway - a clearing house for culture as well as commerce, theology as well as trade. And the Baltic was fringed with convenient ports like Memel, Tilsit and Königsberg. Thither our merchants ventured, and wherever they founded a factory, they planted a kirk.⁶²

The tradition of Scottish young men completing their education in Europe continued well into the eighteenth century:

It became common for the landed class to send their sons to study law at Leyden or Utrecht, and the popularity of the Dutch universities was at its peak between 1675 and 1750. Numbers fell off sharply thereafter, reflecting the new vitality of the Scottish universities, whose own development of legal and medical education was strongly influenced by the Dutch model.⁶³

By the end of the eighteenth century ‘Scottish universities had some 2,850 students: a remarkably high figure for a population of 1.6 million.’⁶⁴ This was in marked contrast to Oxford and Cambridge where student numbers were steadily declining.⁶⁵ Playing no real part in the Enlightenment, exclusively Anglican in nature, ignoring professional education and often, in terms of intake, the exclusive preserve of one school-non-Etonians were only admitted to King’s College, Cambridge, after 1865 - the Oxbridge colleges seemed remote from the concerns of the everyday world. There were also considerable concerns to about the standards of scholarship on show in these colleges. Adam Smith who attended Balliol College as a Snell Exhibitioner wrote to his guardian after matriculation, in 1740, with his initial impression of the university, ‘it will be his own fault if anyone should endanger his health at Oxford by excessive Study, our only business here being to go to prayers twice a

⁶² A. L. Drummond *The Kirk and the Continent* (Edinburgh, 1956) p. x

⁶³ R. D. Anderson (1997) p. 13

⁶⁴ R. D. Anderson (2004) p. 12

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p.10.

day, and to lecture twice a week'.⁶⁶ In his most famous work Smith's contempt for Oxford is palpable, 'In the University of Oxford, the greater part of the publick professors have for these many years, given up all together the pretence of teaching.'⁶⁷ His preferred university model was to be found in his homeland:

In the present state of the Scotch Universities, I do most sincerely look upon them as, in spite of all their faults, without exception the best seminaries of learning that are to be found anywhere in Europe.⁶⁸

Nor was Smith alone in his criticism of Oxford: fellow Scot Daniel Kyte Sandford, who became Professor of Greek at Glasgow, was a student at Christ Church College, Oxford:

I made the university, for upwards of three years, the scene of studies, which, for all the assistance I received in them, might as well have been conducted at Jerusalem.⁶⁹

Leading these attacks was the most famous Whig publication of the age:

a long series of intermittent attacks on Oxford and Cambridge [began] with articles in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1809. The charges were that they were socially and religiously exclusive, had narrow curricula, and were not even very good at what they did teach.⁷⁰

These assaults on the standards of learning at Oxbridge continued throughout the nineteenth century: in 1834 John Stuart Mill reviewing a translation of Plato's *The Protagoras* declared:

⁶⁶ Letter to William Smith 24th August 1740. *The Correspondence of Adam Smith* ed. E. C. Mossner and I.S. Ross (Oxford, 1977) p.1

⁶⁷ *The Wealth of Nations* eds. R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner and W. B. Todd Vol. 2 (Oxford, 1976) p. 761

⁶⁸ Letter to Dr William Cullen [Professor of the Practice Physic, Edinburgh] September 20th 1774 *Correspondence* (1977) p. 173

⁶⁹ D. K. Sandford *A Letter to the Reverend Peter Elmsley, A.M., in Answer to the Appeal Made to Professor Sandford, as Umpire between the University of Oxford & the Edinburgh Review*. (Oxford, 1822) p. 4

⁷⁰ C. Stray 'Curriculum and Style in the Collegiate University: Classics in Nineteenth-Century Oxford' *History of Universities* Vol. XVI (2) (Oxford, 2000) p.184. The man leading the attack in the *Edinburgh Review* was that ornament of the University of Edinburgh, Sir William Hamilton. He regarded Oxford University as in a 'miserable state': 'A Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review against Oxford, Containing an Account of the Studies Pursued at that University', *Edinburgh Review* Vol. 16 (1810) p. 184. A summary of the views of Oxford's defenders and critics in the early nineteenth century is to be found in A. Briggs 'Oxford and its Critics 1800-1835', *The History of the University of Oxford Vol. VI: The Nineteenth Century, Part I*, eds. M. G. Brock and C. Curthoys (Oxford, 1997) pp. 134-145

Our two great ‘seats of learning’ of which no real lover of learning can ever speak but in terms of indignant disgust bestow attention on various branches of classical acquirement in exactly the reverse order to that which would be observed by persons who valued the ancient authors for what is valuable in them: namely, upon the mere niceties of language *first*; next, upon a few of the poets; next (but at a great distance) some of the historians; next (but at a still greater distance) the orators; last of all, and just above nothing, the philosophers.⁷¹

That master of scorn, the Kennedy Professor of Latin, A. E. Housman, described the Greek scholarship of the Master of Balliol in the following terms, ‘Jowett’s *Plato*: the best translation of a Greek philosopher which has ever been executed by a person who understands neither philosophy nor Greek.’⁷² It was Oxbridge’s and the English public school’s concerns for the ‘niceties of language’ that most clearly divided the Scottish tradition in Classics from the English one; the nineteenth century would witness a struggle between the two traditions but also a struggle to retain the preeminent status of the Classics.

⁷¹ *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*. ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto, 1963) Vol. XI p.39

⁷² N. Page *A. E. Housman: A Critical Biography* (1983) p. 146. Benjamin Jowett’s *Dialogues of Plato*, first appeared in 1871.

Chapter Two

A Curious Vacancy: The Missing History of Scottish Classics

Quhy suld I than, with dull forhede and wane,
With ruide engine and barrand emptive brane,
With bad harsk speche and lewit barbour tong,
Presume to write quhar thi suet bell is rong,
Or contirfait sa precious wourdis deir?
Na, na, nocht sua, but knele quhen I thame heir.

Gavin Douglas *The Proloug of the First Book of the Eneados* (1553)

The aim of this thesis is to address a paradoxical situation: on the one hand there is a considerable secondary literature dealing with Scotland's schools and universities in the nineteenth century but, in contrast, there exists no extended academic study of two key elements in that educational process, the teaching of Latin and Greek.

One of the key bibliographical tools for any researcher, even thirty years after its publication, is J. Craigie's two volume work *A Bibliography of Scottish Education*⁷³ with its 600 pages of double column entries it represents a considerable bibliographical achievement. This work lists some fifty-seven articles dealing with Classics but on closer inspection those published before 1872 deal only in general terms with the utility of studying Latin and Greek and those items listed after that date seem to be describing the slow demise of these languages. The *Bibliography* gives few clues as to the Scottish curriculum, the masters or the examination system. James Scotland's two volume *The History of Scottish Education: 'From the Beginning...to the Present Day'*,⁷⁴ devotes, in

⁷³ J. Craigie *A Bibliography of Scottish Education before 1872* (Edinburgh, 1970), *A Bibliography of Scottish Education 1872-1972* (Edinburgh, 1974).

⁷⁴ J. Scotland *The History of Scottish Education Vol. 1: From the Beginning to 1872* (1969), *The History of Scottish Education Vol. 2: 1872 to the Present Day*. There is one factual error in this work: in Vol. 2 p. 257 Scotland describes Alexander Adam, Rector of the Royal High School of Edinburgh, greeting a Schools' Inspector in the 'eighteen-sixties'; Adam died in 1809. R. D. Anderson has also pointed out that Scotland misinterpreted some of the findings of the Argyll Commission (1865-1868), *Education and the Scottish People* (Oxford, 1995) p. 106 footnote.

total, a page and a half to passing references to the Classics. A more recent work, published in 1983, *Scottish Culture and Scottish Education 1800-1980* edited by W. Humes and L. Paterson makes no mention whatsoever of the Classics. The standard modern authority on the period is R. D. Anderson's *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* has a fifteen page select bibliography but only one text listed refers to the Classics: M. L. Clarke's 1959 book *Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900*.⁷⁵ Anderson's book does give a detailed account of the role of the ancient languages in Scottish schooling but he also underlines the regional variations involved in this process.⁷⁶ He also, importantly, notes that 'in the large cities (school boards) taught the rudiments of Latin to a significant number of boys in their elementary schools'.⁷⁷ He gives a much less detailed analysis of the role of the Classics in Scotland's universities and his view that 'Greek had never struck deep roots in Scotland' could certainly be a subject for debate.⁷⁸ Consulting unpublished academic work on the Classics in the nineteenth century only two post graduate theses were located: one considering the University of St Andrews between 1775 and 1844 and a second dealing with Alexander Adam, Rector of the Royal High School of Edinburgh.⁷⁹

One noted authority on the role of Classics in the nineteenth century England, Christopher Stray, has observed:

⁷⁵ Despite the ambitious title Clarke's 180 page book, is in fact an, admittedly elegant, extended essay on the topic.

⁷⁶ Anderson (1983) Table 4.4 pp.120-122

⁷⁷ Ibid p.118.

⁷⁸ Ibid p. 239. The book contains three minor errors: it is incorrect to state that the majority of the 1826 Commissioners were 'Edinburgh lawyers' (p. 46), of the sixteen originally appointed eight were Scottish aristocrats and one the Moderator of the General Assembly, even when the numbers were expanded it was figures like the Rev. John Lee and Sir Walter Scott who were appointed; 'the Englishman Ramsay of Glasgow' (p. 94) was born at the family home Banff House, Aylth, Perthshire; and the Classical Association of Scotland founded in November 1902 did not exist 'two years earlier than the English equivalent' (p. 238) as the latter body was founded at a public meeting on December 19th 1903, *The Classical Association: The First Century* (Oxford, 2003) ed. C. Stray

⁷⁹ See Bibliography Section 4

The serious study of classics in nineteenth century English culture was opened up in the early 1980s by Richard Jenkyns' *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (1980) and Frank Turner's *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (1981)⁸⁰

yet neither Stray's nor Jenkyns' nor Turner's publication have anything to report on the same field of study in Victorian Scotland.⁸¹

The absence of any significant literature dictated an archival approach to this subject; the aim being to investigate what primary source material was available in order to create the beginnings of a detailed picture of the role of the Classics in nineteenth century Scotland. Thus in Chapter Four the private papers of the Rev. John Lee, up until now ignored, are exploited to throw light on the plotting and manoeuvring that took place behind the scenes in the work of the 1826 Royal Commission. Similarly the Harrower Papers, referred to in Chapter Seven, give a unique portrait of the work of this distinguished teacher. The leading modern historian of the period lamented, in a recent article, 'we still know rather little about the workings of the rural school boards,'⁸² perhaps one place to start would be the Log Books that individual headmasters were obliged to keep after the 1840s. In Chapter Six the Log Books lodged at Ayrshire Archives are used as example of what these documents reveal.⁸³ One of the distinctive features of nineteenth century schooling in the north east of Scotland was the effect of the Dick Bequest, yet the author of the routinely recommended essay on this Bequest, Marjorie Cruickshank⁸⁴, makes very little use of the 59 volumes, lodged at the National Archives of Scotland, that are diaries of the Dick

⁸⁰ C. A. Stray *Classics Transformed: Schools, Universities and Society in England 1830-1960* (Oxford, 1998), p. 3. Stray does despite his book's title mention George Davie and the controversy his views generated in Scotland, p. 24, footnote 51.

⁸¹ A recent attempt to remedy this situation was made in 2004 with the publication of the *Dictionary of British Classicists* (Bristol): 63 of the 700 entries are classicists born and educated in Scotland.

⁸² R. D. Anderson 'Northern Identities and the Scottish Educational System', *North-East Identities and Scottish Schooling: The Relationship of The Scottish System To The Culture Of The North-East Of Scotland* ed. D. Northcroft (Aberdeen, 2005) p. 20.

⁸³ Ayrshire Archives are not unique in this respect: the Schools Archives, Mitchell Library, Glasgow holds over thirty Log Books from the period in question. Reference SR 10.

⁸⁴ 'The Dick Bequest: The Effect Of A Famous Nineteenth Century Endowment On Parish Schools Of North East Scotland', *History of Education Quarterly* v (1965) pp. 153-165.

Bequest Visitor (Inspector) on his annual tour of the region's parochial schools. In Chapter Seven makes reference to the vivid and detailed portraits these records provide.

Any analysis of the role of Classics in nineteenth century Scotland must take account of the larger debates that were swirling around the nation's schools and universities and as is so often the case in arguments about education these educational controversies were in fact proxies for arguments about much larger issues. 'Reform!' was the cry but the issue in terms of these ancient languages was whether reform meant loosening the 'Arctic grip'⁸⁵ Latin and Greek had on the curriculum or whether it had to include retaining this unique aspect of Scottish schooling where 'classical teaching was more diffused' than in England?⁸⁶

'Universities never reform themselves: everyone knows that', prime minister Lord Melbourne told the House of Lords in 1837⁸⁷ and the issue of the true nature and function of a university is a controversy that has continued from the early nineteenth century to this day. The problem was that the universities, 'the most European of institutions',⁸⁸ were defined not by abstract goal 'but by the clientele which they attracted and the functions which they fulfilled in a given society by the market and social demand'.⁸⁹ Universities too were inextricably linked to issues of national identity; it is unsurprising that when the new university colleges were opened in Ireland and Wales the issue adopting the native language in teaching the academic subjects a major concern.⁹⁰ In Scotland this debate over language took a more subtle turn: it concerned the 'correct' pronunciation of English and

⁸⁵ Scotland (1969) Vol. 2 p. 74

⁸⁶ Clarke (1959) p. 152.

⁸⁷ Anderson (2008) p. 35

⁸⁸ Anderson (2004) p. 5

⁸⁹ Ibid p. 2

⁹⁰ The first Scottish chair of Gaelic was established in 1882, not at Aberdeen as may have been expected but in Edinburgh.

also of the ancient languages, particularly Latin.⁹¹ This question concerning nationhood was of particular importance in Scotland:

It may seem a paradox to speak of a Scottish view of the state in the nineteenth century when there was no longer a Scottish state; yet the political system did allow this tradition to be expressed in the process of university reform.⁹²

The crucial point to many Scots was the antiquity of their universities: to this day they are usually referred to as 'Scotland's ancient universities', they were as old as nearly any university in Europe and saw no need to defer to either Oxford or Cambridge. If there had to be reform it would be on Scottish terms. One possible model for reform was Europe's newest university, the University of Berlin, established in 1810; but the Humboldtian model of a research based academy found little favour in Britain; the first British Ph.D. was awarded in 1919.⁹³

One of the first to seriously address the business of university reform was George Jardine, Professor of Logic and Rhetoric at Glasgow University. He was very concerned about the how philosophy was taught in Britain's universities, it was:

too much confined to the mere communication of knowledge; and too little attention is bestowed on the formation of those intellectual habits of thinking,

⁹¹ The debate over the 'correct' pronunciation of English began in Scotland after the Act of Union as witnessed by publications such as the, anonymous, eighteenth century, *Scoticisms Arranged in Alphabetical Order Designed to Correct Improprieties of Speech and Writing* (Edinburgh, 1787). As regards Latin, W.S. Allen in the standard work on the topic declared, 'It was a strangely pronounced language, far removed from classical Latin, which was current in England by the nineteenth century.' *Vox Latina* Cambridge, 1965) p. 105. 'Different national traditions of pronunciation made spoken Latin of the English gentleman a characteristic, to be lauded or deplored, of England itself. The ideology of Englishness which was assembled in reaction to Continental cultural and political developments in the nineteenth century focused on individuality, autonomy and freedom as the glory of England, contrasted to the regimented and centralised traditions of France and Prussia', C. A. Stray (1998) p. 127. For the debate on Scottish pronunciation see Professor Hardie's paper 'Pronunciation of Greek and Latin in Schools and Colleges' given to the Classical Association of Scotland in 1904, *Classical Association of Scotland. Proceedings 1904-1905* (Edinburgh, 1905) pp. 9-23. Hardie also chaired a committee for the Association on this topic whose report was circulated to Scottish schools in 1906.

⁹² R. D. Anderson 'The Scottish University Tradition: Past and Present', in *Scottish Universities: Distinctiveness and Diversity* eds. J. J. Carter and D. J. Withrington (Edinburgh, 1992) p. 70

⁹³ Anderson (2004) p. 197

judging, reasoning and communication, upon which the farther prosecution of science, and the business of active life depend.⁹⁴

Since all authorities, both Victorian and modern, accept the important part philosophy played in the Scottish university curriculum; Jardine's remarks have a particular resonance. His critique included extended comments on Scottish classical education,:

In all our colleges, a considerable part of the undergraduate course is devoted to the study of Greek and Latin; but, those in Scotland, the attention is not so exclusively to the learned languages, as in the universities of the south. We do not, in this part of the kingdom, attach to classical learning that high and almost exclusive degree of importance which is ascribed to it elsewhere; thinking it of greater consequence to the students, to receive instructions in the elements of science, both mental and physical, than to acquire even the most accurate knowledge of the ancient tongues; of which all that is valuable may, it is thought be obtained without so great a sacrifice of time and labour.⁹⁵

These comments published in 1825 give a concise position of the Scottish attitude to the classics: important but not paramount; and this view underpins much of what is detailed in the later chapters. Jardine concludes his argument by arguing for a synthesis:

Classical learning, mathematics, and the elements of philosophy, are, no doubt very useful for giving employment to the intellectual powers of youth... But other studies, besides these, are necessary to qualify men for the business of life; for, if the education given at college is meant to have any reference to the conduct of affairs in, in the ordinary departments of human pursuits, I maintain that there is, at present, an utter incompatibility between the means and the ends.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ G. Jardine *Outlines of Philosophical Education illustrated by the Method of Teaching at the Logic Class in the University of Glasgow*, (Glasgow, 1825) p. v

⁹⁵ Ibid p. 418

⁹⁶ Ibid pp. 512-513

It is perhaps unfortunate that when the process of reform began Jardine was too ill to give evidence when the Royal Commissioners visited Glasgow, in 1827.⁹⁷

The classic defence of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake was provided by J. H. Newman in his *The Idea of a University*⁹⁸, published in 1852 and indeed one of the chapters is entitled 'Knowledge for its Own Sake'. For Newman the importance of Latin seems to be a given and he concludes his apologia for the language by stating:

the great moral I would impress upon you is this: that in learning to write Latin, as in all learning, you must not trust to books, but only make use of them; not hang like a dead weight upon your teacher, but catch some of his life; handle what is given you, not as a formula, but as a pattern to copy and as a capital to improve, throw your heart and mind into what you are about, and thus unite the separate advantages of being tutored and of being self-taught yet without oddities, and tutored, yet without conventionalities.⁹⁹

One can admire the sinuosity of Newman's prose style but in truth this book made little impact on the reformers either in Ireland or in Britain as a whole. Newman was famously a product of Oxford and in the mid-nineteenth century the differences between Oxford and the Scottish universities could not have been starker: Anglican in faith, relying very largely on teaching by the tutorial method and having as 'scholars', men who were the beneficiaries of sinecures:

It was upon the quality and character of the fellows that the quality and character of the University depended; they were in effect, the trustees of an important national trust. It was essential, one would suppose, that they should be chosen... with regard to their fitness for office. In fact, that was true of just 22 out of the 545 person who

⁹⁷ Jardine published his lecture notes, in Latin, in 1820 *Quaedam ex Logicae Compediis Selecta* (Glasgow, 1820)

⁹⁸ 'unquestionably the single most important treatise in the English language on the nature and meaning of higher education, S. Rothblatt 'An Oxonian 'Idea' of a University: J. H. Newman and Well-Being' in *History of the University of Oxford Vol. VI: The Nineteenth Century, Part I*, eds. M. G. Brock and C. Cuthoys (Oxford, 1997) p. 287

⁹⁹ J. H. Newman *The Idea of a University* (New York, 1959) p.344

were fellows of Oxford colleges in 1850. The rest were all of them holders of 'closed' fellowships, reserved for persons with special qualifications - e.g. men who had been born in the Province of Canterbury, or in the Diocese of Lincoln, or in the County of Dorset, or not more than fifty miles from Knaresborough, or in the parish where the Founder had been born himself.¹⁰⁰

Attempts at reform of the Oxford system were led by figures such as Mark Pattison who in 1868, outlined his scheme for change:

[Pattison's] programme was a radical one. It involved nothing less than the abolition of the colleges and fellowships. The buildings would not, of course, be pulled down; but the corporations would be dissolved and their endowments transferred to the University. Nine of the Colleges would become the headquarters of the nine Faculties, the senior professor being ex officio head of each... The others to be kept on as halls of residence for those undergraduates who preferred a communal existence or, as Pattison scornfully put it 'who come up to get a social stamp'.¹⁰¹

Certainly those campaigning for the reform of Oxford were very familiar with Scotland's university system and indeed at one point there was, in 1878, a proposal to add a 'Scotch university' to the existing collegiate system; in other words provide a low cost, non-residential programme of undergraduate study.¹⁰²

Those who, during the nineteenth century, wished to reform Scotland's universities had to confront three main challenges: improving the administration of these institutions, putting their finances on a more substantial footing and above all 'modernising' the curriculum.

The Universities (Scotland) Act of 1858 overhauled the medieval management structures

¹⁰⁰ J. Sparrow *Mark Pattison and the Idea of a University* (Cambridge, 1967) p. 86

¹⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 121-122. It is perhaps worth noting that in this work the Warden of All Souls notes the 1860 ratio of German and Austrian undergraduates set against the total population, 18,000 out of 50 million which was in stark contrast to the Oxbridge undergraduate intake set against the population of England and Wales 3,000 out of a population of 20 millions, yet he has nothing to say about Scotland which would have been much more like the Germanic pattern.

¹⁰² The phrase was coined by Jowett, the Master of Balliol. A. Bullock, ' "A Scotch University added to Oxford"? The Non-Collegiate Students', *The History of the University of Oxford Vol. VII: Nineteenth Century Oxford, Part 2* eds. M. G. Brock and M. C. Curthoys (Oxford, 2000) p.204

of the universities, it was this Act that introduced the University Court, regularised the composition of the Senatus, freed Edinburgh from its municipal master but retained the ancient office of Rector at the universities. In terms of finance it was a perennial complaint in Scotland that its universities did not have any like the great, endowed wealth of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges.¹⁰³ They had no fat livings to award to favoured sons. The Dick Bequest, one of Scotland's most important educational benefactions, was restricted to three rural shires in the north east of the country. The remedy for this indigence eventually came from one of Scotland's own sons, Andrew Carnegie. He gave £2,000,000, in 1901, to set up the trust that bears his name and this body dispensed funds thereafter for student bursaries but also and very importantly for capital building projects. The reform of the curriculum of the Arts Faculties inevitably involved addressing the issue of the two ancient languages, they were compulsory subjects and if some new subject or subjects were to be introduced, something would have to go. For some it seemed these were the obvious candidates, yet they were to retain their position throughout the nineteenth century. The Scottish attitude to Greek and Latin were different from the opinions that prevailed on the banks of the Isis and the Cam.

A Victorian Scot would have taken been somewhat taken aback by John Stuart Mill's judgement:

The battle of Marathon even as an event in English history is more important than the battle of Hastings. If the issue of that day had been different, the Britons and Saxons might still have been wandering in the woods.¹⁰⁴

There was no cult of Hellenism in Scotland fostered by a private school education system and an Oxford degree. No vivid, flamboyant Hellenising don like the Irishman John Pentland Mahaffy or his most famous pupil, Oscar Wilde, could be found in the lecture halls of Glasgow or Aberdeen. Walter Pater's claim that

¹⁰³ Wealth even great wealth is, it seems, relative. 'The College [All Souls] was, and is wealthy... All Oxford income figures, however, are dwarfed by Trinity and King's in Cambridge'. J. Lowe, *The Warden, A Portrait of John Sparrow* (1998) p. 196

¹⁰⁴ J. S. Mill 'Grote's History of Greece [1]' Vol. XI (1963) p.273

Greek sensuousness...does not fever the conscience: it is shameless and childlike.

Christian asceticism, on the other hand, discrediting the slightest touch of sense, has...provoked into strong emphasis the contrast or antagonism to itself, of the artistic life, with its inevitable sensuousness.¹⁰⁵

was not to be heard on the benches at Edinburgh and St Andrews.

The important cultural process that was occurring in the nineteenth century was the celebration, or to the sceptic, the invention, of nationhood. The evidence that could be employed to support this would include at the very least three heads of evidence. The first would be the vast popularity in Great Britain and abroad of the historical novels of Sir Walter Scott: the Scottish scholar who edited the twelve volumes of Scott's letters, H.J.C. Grierson, insisted, 'The Scotland that lives in the imagination of other people is the Scotland of the Waverley Novels.'¹⁰⁶ Secondly, there was the spread of Burns Clubs throughout the Anglo-Saxon world¹⁰⁷ and finally the celebration, in monumental form, of the deeds of William Wallace.¹⁰⁸ As has already been stated this construction of nationhood included the ancient Scottish universities and if part of their antiquity included the teaching of Greek, then it should be retained. As well as the appeal to tradition there was also the more hard-headed argument that Greek was needed to enter the divinity colleges and was also a compulsory subject in new open examinations for entry into the domestic or Indian civil service.

The position of Latin seemed unassailable not least because of its central importance in the annual university bursary examinations. Over and above this justification, three others were often given, in Britain, for studying Latin:

¹⁰⁵ W. Pater 'Winckelmann' *The Renaissance. Studies in Art and Literature* (Berkeley, 1980) p. 177

¹⁰⁶ H.J.C. Grierson 'Scott and Carlyle' *Essays and Studies* Vol. XIII (Oxford, 1928) p. 108

¹⁰⁷ The first Burns supper was held in Alloway in 1801 and in five years the fashion had reached Oxford. By 1886 there were 37 Burns Clubs in Scotland, England, Australia and the USA.

¹⁰⁸ The first monument to Wallace was erected in Dryburgh in 1814 and paid for by the Earl of Buchan, others were erected at Lanark (1821), Bairnweil, Ayrshire (1855) and Aberdeen (1888). The most dramatic was erected at Stirling in 1869; the cost of £18,000 being raised by a public subscription. It is perhaps worth noting in this context that the monument to George Buchanan, erected in 1788 at his birthplace Killearn, was restored by public subscription in 1850. To all this must be added the debate over the real or imagined antiquity of the tartan/plaid, see H. Trevor-Roper 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', *The Invention of Tradition* eds. E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (Cambridge, 1983) pp. 15-42

cultural refinement, political wisdom and mental discipline...the first was unable to survive the decline of the social hierarchy... the second came to be seen as irrelevant in a democracy and the third was destroyed with the third falling from favour [as it was] shown that there was no more than limited transfer of knowledge and skills from one field of learning to another. Nevertheless until well into the twentieth century, Latin, at least, retained a social prestige that came to be mapped onto the emerging stratification of secondary schooling.

These arguments and counter arguments certainly apply to England but the author of this account, Lindsay Paterson, makes a very important distinction:

However, in contrast to debates in England, there was no sense in these Scottish debates [of the Classical Association of Scotland] of resistance to the democratisation of secondary schooling. The Classical Association of Scotland saw itself as defending and extending the tradition of Latin in the parish schools. One illustration, from W. King Gillies, rector of the Edinburgh Royal High School, in the *Proceedings* in 1922, show the sentiment: 'in Scotland [Latin] was never the hall-mark of a social class, but we must prevent it becoming such now, and provide it for every genuine secondary pupil.'¹⁰⁹

The most noted if controversial critic of the reform of Scotland's universities in the nineteenth century is George Davie who presented his provocative argument in his book *The Democratic Intellect*, published in 1961. Davie's thesis was, in essence, that almost irresistible anglophile forces both within and beyond Scotland had, by the end of the nineteenth century, dismantled the traditional Scottish degree programme and replaced it with a more highly regarded specialist programme of study. He also argued that the forces seeking the 'reform' and 'modernization' of Scotland's universities, in the nineteenth century, were trying to impose a more socially conservative and elitist structure on to these ancient institutions. *The Democratic Intellect* was warmly welcomed by reviewers as

¹⁰⁹ L. Paterson *The Leaving Certificate Curriculum of Scottish Secondary Schools 1900-1939* Seminar Department of Scottish History, Edinburgh University, March 22nd 2007. As yet unpublished.

different as David Daiches ‘an important book’¹¹⁰ and Herbert Butterfield, ‘interesting and stimulating’.¹¹¹ Indeed, in retrospect, it can be seen that Davie’s arguments, together with the efforts of a fellow Scot, A. D. Lindsay,¹¹² provided a very important input into the debate that followed the publication of the Robbins’ Report in 1963 which in turn led to the creation of six new universities, in the 1960s, all adopting, initially at least, a generalist, ‘Scottish’ foundation course for their Arts degree course.¹¹³

Davie’s book and particularly its title¹¹⁴ had a particular resonance in Scotland because of the three institutions that largely define Scotland as a different nation: the legal system, the Kirk, and the education system, it was the last that fell within the experience of all Scots. In the nineteenth century the legal system was largely the preserve of the Scottish upper classes and the established church had been rent asunder, in 1843, by the Great Disruption. The one great common experience was attending either the parochial or the burgh school. Lurking behind the Davie thesis is of course that familiar figure in Scottish ‘kailyard’ fiction, ‘the lad o’pairts’: the poor but able boy who by his own ability and the support of his dominie and village wins a university bursary and then a respected place in Scottish society.¹¹⁵ One of the enduring beliefs held by many in Scotland then and now was that the

¹¹⁰ Daiches’ review appeared in *The Spectator* August 18th 1961 p. 216.

¹¹¹ Butterfield’s review appeared in the *University of Edinburgh Gazette* Number 32 January 1962 p.29.

¹¹² Alexander Dunlop Lindsay (1879-1952) was educated at the University of Glasgow and then, as a Ferguson Scholar, at University College, Oxford. After he retired from his twenty one years service as Master of Balliol he became the driving force behind the establishment of University of North Staffordshire (1949) later becoming the University of Keele (1962).

[Lindsay] looked back on his own student days in Glasgow and regretted that Oxford did not have the high standard of teaching for Pass degrees that Glasgow then had. ‘When I was a student at Glasgow’, he said, ‘ professors gave their best to the ordinary classes. The wonderful impression which A.C. Bradley and Gilbert Murray made on the students of the University of Glasgow was made through their ordinary classes. Not on a mere handful of people who took honours in English or Greek....That tradition...produced in me the impression that anyone could teach honours students but it required one’s whole imagination and energy to teach the ordinary class’.

D. Scott A. D. Lindsay (Oxford, 1971) pp.347-348.

¹¹³ They were: East Anglia (1963), Lancaster (1964), Essex (1964), Warwick (1965), Kent (1965) and Stirling (1968). University of Sussex received its charter in 1961 so predates the publication of the Robbins Report.

¹¹⁴ The phrase ‘democratic intellect’ was first coined, in 1932, by the then Secretary of State for Scotland, the Conservative M.P. Sir Walter Elliot (1888-1958). As Donald Withrington has pointed out, in *Constructing a New University Tradition* (2000) the term was a creation of the 1930s to describe a phenomenon that may have taken place a century before; many of the tools used to describe Scottish culture often rely on such exercises in retrospection.

¹¹⁵ One can only ponder what Davie would have made of the abolition by the Scottish Parliament of university tuition fees, in 2000, and their retention south of the Tweed.

Scottish education system was meritocratic unlike the English system of private schooling and privilege: the gates of Christminster were closed to Jude Fawley but Glasgow welcomed the likes of David Livingstone and George Douglas Brown.¹¹⁶ R. D. Anderson has pointed out that this paradigm could be exploited by both conservatives and radicals: to the former it permitted admission to the establishment for the most gifted without disturbing the settled order of things; for the latter it insisted that the possibility of creating an elite of the very able, rather than the well born, was possible in Scotland.¹¹⁷

The publication of *The Democratic Intellect* preceded a revival in the political fortunes of the Scottish Nationalist Party¹¹⁸ and so it is unsurprising that some reviewers regarded the book as a nationalist polemic by a writer who was essentially a peyorist, lamenting a vanished golden age of Scottish education; the final gift of the Scottish Enlightenment. The anonymous reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* concluded his largely enthusiastic review by saying the, 'This important book is marked by the *praeferendum ingenium Scotorum*'.¹¹⁹ Davie maintained that his perspective was not nationalist but *internationalist*: vastly powerful anglophile forces, supported by some Scots, forced changes upon the Scottish universities to make them more 'English', in curricular terms. The ancient historical links between the Scottish universities and their academic cousins in mainland Europe were severed: Bologna, Leiden and Basle were their traditional, natural partners, not Oxford or Cambridge.

Davie himself admitted, when interviewed in 2002, that his 1961 book omitted certain key elements: he specified, in particular, the financial impact of the Carnegie Trust after 1901 and also the effect of the great increase in university provision in England and Wales. The thesis presented in *The Democratic Intellect* can be challenged in terms of emphasis and

¹¹⁶ The term 'lad o' pairs', first occurred in print, in 1895, in the immensely popular novel by 'Ian MacLaren' [Rev. John Watson] *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*. Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* was first published in the same year.

¹¹⁷ R. D. Anderson, 'In Search of the Lad of Parts: The Mythical History of Scottish Education', *History Workshop: A Journal of Socialist and Feminist Historians*. Vol. 19 (1985), pp. 82-104.

¹¹⁸ In 1967 the SNP won the parliamentary seat of Hamilton, their first victory since 1945. In the General Election of 1974 11 SNP MPs were returned to Westminster.

¹¹⁹ *Times Literary Supplement* September 29th 1961 p. 644. Given the nature of British academic life, Davie would have found out pretty quickly that the reviewer in question was a fellow Scot, Colm Brogan.

also in the fact that there are serious omissions. Davie, a professional philosopher, describing the Scottish generalist degree, insisted early on in his book, that philosophy was the academic subject 'given the role of *primus inter pares*.'¹²⁰ This is contentious to say the least. If any subject occupied that privileged position it was Humanity [Latin]: a Scottish undergraduate would matriculate with a very solid grounding in that language and spend usually two or, for the most able, three years advancing his knowledge. This was the greatest hurdle the 'lad o' pairts' had to confront, as David Livingstone and George Douglas Brown were to discover in attempting to enter the University of Glasgow. Davie also seems to regard the Scottish universities as all broadly similar when in fact they were quite fiercely different and independent bodies. This alone can explain the determined resistance to the proposal, first mooted in the 1831 Report, of creating a federated University of Scotland. This was the path that was followed in the north of England, Wales and Ireland in the second half of the nineteenth century. This strong sense of their independent antiquity was reinforced, perhaps, in the late nineteenth century, when these ancient Scottish universities, taking their cue from their European cousins, celebrated, with great pomp, the anniversaries of their foundation, beginning with Edinburgh in 1884.¹²¹

Davie has nothing to say about the system of appointing classical professors, the governance of the universities and, most seriously of all, he avoids any discussion of Scottish schooling. In terms of appointments to chairs in Greek or Humanity each Scottish university seemed to follow a different tradition: the chair of Greek at Glasgow was the preserve of Oxbridge educated scholars; at Edinburgh no Englishman was successful in applying for either chair, whilst at Aberdeen the successful applicants were invariably graduates from that very university. It is fair to say that the Scottish tradition in Latin was robust enough for these institutions to look no further than their fellow countrymen when

¹²⁰ G. E. Davie *The Democratic Intellect* (Edinburgh, 1981), paperback edition, p. 14.

¹²¹ Oxford and Cambridge due their collegiate nature tend to celebrate the founders of individual colleges, in their daily prayers, rather than the foundation of the university as a corporate body. See R. Adams, *The College Graces of Oxford and Cambridge* (Oxford, 1992).

looking to fill a vacancy. In Greek the situation was much more parlous: the standards were often low in the Junior Greek class and the classes were large, but this guaranteed, therefore, a large salary, as the professor retained all class fees, added to which the teaching year was only six months long. In many notable cases these advantages attracted some very able scholars from south of the Tweed. There were also, before the reforms of 1859, several well documented examples of chairs being bequeathed from one generation of a family to the next, of appointments that are clearly the result of political or religious jobbery or finally of the post simply being sold to the highest bidder.¹²²

Davie begins his polemic by dealing with the 1826 Royal Commission, 'The First Assault', but conspicuously ignores much contained in their four volumes of evidence, which showed, in great detail, in the teaching of the classics, the very different pedagogical approaches adopted at each institution. He describes the 1889 Universities (Scotland) Act in the most dramatic of terms as 'the great dividing line between past and present in the educational history of Scotland'¹²³; this was the moment when the Scottish generalist tradition was vanquished. Yet it could be argued that the powers of Scottish professors, over the curriculum and the appointment of assistants, were still considerable even after 1889. Distinguished defenders of the native tradition like John Harrower (Greek) at Aberdeen were to remain in office for another forty years; Ramsay (Humanity) at Glasgow was not to retire until 1906. Davie often seeks to describe individual Scots as belonging to one or other camp, 'their difference was not political but national'¹²⁴ and he is, therefore, sometimes drawn into making a false antithesis. Thus Professor Sandford (Greek, Glasgow 1821-1838) is called 'the Oxonian'¹²⁵ and Professor Blackie (Humanity, Aberdeen 1839-1851; Greek, Edinburgh 1852-1882) is eulogised as 'a figure of real significance in the

¹²² This situation was not unique to Scottish education, at Eton College between 1796 and 1922 the post of drawing master was the personal property of one family, the Evanses. See H. Carpenter, *The Brideshead Generation* (1989) footnote p.14.

¹²³ Davie p. 8.

¹²⁴ Davie p. 39. Both Sandford and Blackie were Scots, by birth.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

cultural and educational life of Scotland'.¹²⁶ The truth of the matter is that Sandford was contemptuous of the 'standards' at Oxford and Blackie not only produced little work of any lasting scholarly merit but owed his appointment at Aberdeen to his father's political connections. Indeed Blackie was a very vocal enemy of the meritocratic ideals of the democratic intellect, 'the impertinent and short-sighted idea which some people in Scotland seem to entertain, that the Universities ought to be regulated for the sons of the poorest class'.¹²⁷

Not all accepted, then or now, the Davie argument, some found it perhaps too Manichean; but even his fiercest critics agreed the book was very important: Humes and Paterson dismissed his 'his wilful analysis' but agreed that he set a particular and unavoidable agenda, he 'served to generate a new interest and debate'.¹²⁸ What perhaps did not help the cause of debate was Davie's public silence, at least in print, for twenty five years, on the issue. It was not until 1986, when perhaps significantly Davie was retired from his post at Edinburgh University, that *The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect* was published.¹²⁹ In the later work Davie outlines the twentieth century campaigns to preserve a Scottish generalist tradition. Leading this campaign in the early years was John Burnet, Professor of Greek at St Andrews, who believed that

The most important side of any department of knowledge is the side on which it comes into touch with every other department. To insist on this was the true function of humanism.¹³⁰

Forty years on, the most judicious judgement on Davie's book was given by an Edinburgh colleague, R. D Anderson:

¹²⁶ Ibid p. 241.

¹²⁷ S. Wallace, *John Stuart Blackie: Scottish Scholar and Patriot* (Edinburgh, 2006) p.225.

¹²⁸ Humes and Paterson (Edinburgh, 1983) p. 8. It has to be admitted that sometimes Davie had to be rescued from his supporters: Craig Beveridge and Ronald Turnbull, in their *The Eclipse of Scottish Culture* (Edinburgh, 1989), see parallels between the Scots and the Algerians under French colonial rule: the inhabitants of Charlotte Square in Edinburgh and Park Circus in Glasgow are apparently the wretched of the earth.

¹²⁹ Whether Davie was silent or silenced is possibly a very moot point. See Appendix 2.

¹³⁰ G. Davie *The Crisis of the Democratic Intellect* (Edinburgh, 186) p. 15

From the historian's point of view there is much to criticise in Davie's detailed account of nineteenth century developments, but his central point can scarcely be contested: that there was a specific Scottish ideal of general education distinguished from others by its emphasis on philosophy.¹³¹

What Davie's 1961 book certainly did do was to prevent, ever after, any history of Scottish education being presented in purely teleological terms; the post-Davie analysis had to acknowledge the larger discourse over nationhood.

The chapters that follow attempt to supplement, reinforce and perhaps correct some of Davie's passionate vision of what was, what exists and what should be Scotland's education system. The structure is thus: the next chapter deals with the revival of Greek studies in Edinburgh, the fourth chapter summarises the work of the 1826 Royal Commission; after this the issue of teaching Humanity [Latin] at Glasgow is considered and then the issue, ignored by Davie, of Scotland's schools is considered; this is followed by a consideration of Aberdeen's supreme record in teaching the Classics and finally the resurrection of St Andrews from near extinction is examined and also its role in exploiting a new student constituency, women.

This thesis represents a very modest, provisional answer to the question of how Greek and, especially, Latin were once taught and received in nineteenth century Scotland. No survey has yet been provided of how this process took place in the nation's schools and ancient universities and there is a clear need that such a separate and powerful national tradition be described.

Attention needs now to be paid to the revival of Greek studies in Victorian Scotland, a process that began at the University of Edinburgh where Andrew Dalziel, Professor of Greek, became the model for all succeeding classical professors.

¹³¹ Anderson (1992) p. 71

Chapter Three

‘Too much of a Scot’: The Chair of Greek at the University of Edinburgh 1772-1882

‘If it had not been for that confounded Solemn League and Covenant we would have made as longs and shorts as they the English.’

Andrew Dalzel¹³²

The revival of Greek studies began in Scotland, just as in England, in the eighteenth century.¹³³ The first chair of Greek, which established the status of the subject, was created at Glasgow in 1704 and the first occupant was Alexander Dunlop, son of the university’s Principal. Other Scottish universities followed suit: Francis Pringle at St Leonard’s College, St Andrews (1705), Alexander Fraser at King’s College (1712?), Alexander Moir at Marischal College (1714) and Colin Drummond at Edinburgh (1730). Gradually the old system of regenting was dismantled; it was abolished at Edinburgh in 1708, at Glasgow in 1727, at St Andrews in 1747, at Marischal in 1753 and at King’s College in 1799. The most distinguished of Scottish professors in Greek in this period were James Moor and Andrew Dalzel; the former Professor at Glasgow, the latter at Edinburgh:

Moor’s Greek Grammar *Elementa Linguae Graecae* (1755) ousted the old Westminster manuals from the curriculum and became the set book throughout the university system well into the next century.¹³⁴

But the more important figure in the history of classical studies in Scotland was the occupant of the Edinburgh chair:

¹³² H. Cockburn *Memorials of His Time* (Edinburgh, 1856) p. 21

¹³³ ‘According to A. E. Housman and Ulrich Von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff ... the great age of English classical scholarship began with the publication of (Bentley’s) *Epistola*’ [in 1691]. S. Grebe *Dictionary of British Classicists* Vol. 1 p.67.

¹³⁴ M. A. Stewart ‘The Origins of the Scottish Greek Chairs’ *Owls to Athens: Essays on Classical Subjects Presented to Sir Kenneth Dover* ed. Craik, E.M. (Oxford, 1998) p. 400. Moor is also important as the Classical Adviser to the Foulis Press. Robert Foulis was his brother-in-law

The most distinguished Greek professor at Edinburgh in our period was Andrew Dalzel...He was a zealous teacher, and in a period in which the Scottish capital and its university expanded and flourished he saw to it that Greek played its part in Edinburgh education.¹³⁵

Dalzel was born in 1743 at Gateside of Neliston in Linthgowshire, near Edinburgh, the son of a tenant farmer and cabinet maker. His father died when he was eight and he and the oldest boy, Archibald,¹³⁶ came under the care of a family uncle, Reverend Andrew Dalzel, and under his tuition the boys were soon reading Caesar and Sallust. But the uncle's health began to deteriorate and the boys returned to Gateside, and attended the parish school at Kirkliston. It is here that perhaps the most important figure in Dalzel's life enters the story, the Reverend Dr John Drysdale.¹³⁷

The matriculation records of the University of Edinburgh show that Dalzel enrolled in 1758 in George Stuart's Humanity class along with forty-eight other students; the traditional starting point for Scottish undergraduates.¹³⁸ No university calendars or teaching records survive from that period, so it is impossible to be sure what texts were studied in Stuart's class.¹³⁹ Most of the students in the class would have been studying Latin for five or six years so it can be assumed that the major texts were the Latin poets and orators together with the inevitable Livy. The following year Dalzel enrolled in Robert

¹³⁵ M. L. Clarke *Greek Studies in England* Cambridge (1945) p. 44, 'The best summary account', G. P. Edwards' Aberdeen and its Classical Tradition' in *Aberdeen University Review* No. 176, Autumn (1986), p. 424.

¹³⁶ Archibald (1740-c.1811) trained as a doctor but in order to secure the family's fortunes became engaged in the slave trade.

¹³⁷ John Drysdale (1718-1788) was born in Kirkcaldy and educated at the parish school together with his life long friend, Adam Smith. At Edinburgh University he read classics, theology and philosophy... After ordination he assisted at the College Church in Edinburgh. With the patronage of the Earl of Hopetoun he secured the living at Kirkliston in 1748. His appointment by the Corporation of Edinburgh to the living at Lady Yester's Church in the city caused a major controversy due his association with the 'Moderate' wing of the Kirk. He was twice Moderator of the General Assembly (1773 and 1784) and in 1785 was appointed to the important and permanent post of Principal Clerk to the General Assembly. He married Mary Adam daughter of Scotland's most distinguished architect, Robert Adam. Dalzel married Drysdale's daughter Anne in 1786.

¹³⁸ There were approximately 500 students at the University of whom some 200 would be studying medicine; Edinburgh and Glasgow had a European reputation in this field.

¹³⁹ The earliest Scottish university calendar extant is for Glasgow in 1827 but the next to appear was published in 1844 and then follows another gap of twenty years from 1845 to 1865. In 1833 *The Edinburgh University Almanack* appeared, but then, as at Glasgow, there a gap, until 1858. At St Andrews the first Calendar dates from 1852 and at Aberdeen the first Calendar that appeared in 1864.

Hunter's Greek class. As has been stated already, many in Hunter's class would be beginners, but as many hoped to be licensed as ministers it is safe to assume that along with basic Greek grammar they would have studied extracts from the Gospels.¹⁴⁰ Dalzel remembering Hunter said he spent the first six weeks of the session reading Latin texts to his students, generally Livy and Lucan, as if the session were too long to be spent on Greek. In 1760 Dalzel joined John Stevenson's class in Logic (*Philosophiae Rationalis*). There then appears to be a break of three years in his academic studies and then in 1764 his name is entered on the matriculation roll for Adam Ferguson's classes in Natural Philosophy. His final class was taken in 1766 with Ferguson who by that time held the chair of Moral Philosophy.

It is perhaps worth noting, at this point, that a feature of Scottish student life was that the scions of Scottish aristocratic families sat on the wooden benches next to the 'lad o' pairs': in the 1766 class were the two sons of the Duke of Warwick, the Hon(s) Charles and Robert Fulke Greville.¹⁴¹ Care must be taken, however, not to over romanticise this picture of academic equality in the lecture room. Alexander Carlyle observed, in his autobiography, that when he was a student at Edinburgh in 1759, the Professor of Humanity, Stuart

Like other schoolmasters [he] was very partial to his scholars of rank, and having two lords in his class - viz Lord Balgonie and Lord Dalziel - he took great pains to make them (especially for the first, for the second was hardly ostensible) appear amongst the best scholars, which would not do, and only served to make him ridiculous as well as his young lord. The best by far at the class were Colonel Robert Hepburn...James Edgar...Alexander Tait...and Alexander Bertram.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ This certainly true in the case of Glasgow as revealed by the 1827 Calendar mentioned above; the Greek class were examined in 'the Four Gospels and Homer, Three Books', p.34.

¹⁴¹ When Carlyle enrolled at Edinburgh in 1809 one of his classmates was Lord Elcho. Also three future Prime Ministers, (Melbourne, Russell and Palmerston) received a university education in Scotland.

¹⁴² A. Carlyle *Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk 1722-1805* (Edinburgh, 1910), pp. 35-36.

These aristocrats, despite their private tutoring, were clearly not the most able Latinists in Kerr's Humanity class. These gentlemen, however, were also an important source of extra revenue, for the professors of Edinburgh offered board and lodging to them: Professors Blair and Robertson charging £300 a year during the 1760 and 1770s, Fergusson was more modest, charging £240.¹⁴³

The gaps in Dalzel's eight years spent in Edinburgh can perhaps be explained in one of two possible ways. His original ambition was, it seems, to train for the ministry and after three years transfer to theological college but, he may have abandoned theological studies and returned to the Arts programme.¹⁴⁴ A second possibility, which was a common pattern at the time in Scotland, was for students to withdraw from university studies for a period and earn money by teaching to support their families and also to provide the necessary income to resume their studies. It is more than likely, if this latter option was the case, that Dalzel sought employment at the High School of Edinburgh which was at that time located a two minute walk away from the university. The fortunes of this school had been revived by Alexander Adam¹⁴⁵ and he certainly admired the younger man and paid him a generous tribute over the help he had given him in the proof reading of the text of his *Principles of Latin and English Grammar*, 'the person from whom he derived the greatest advantage was Mr Dalzel who read over every sheet, and favoured him with important observations.'¹⁴⁶ It may be no more than coincidence that the controversy over the High School's decision to start teaching Greek occurred when Dalzel, if not as a salaried teacher, certainly had, as a private tutor, daily contact with the school.

The next stage in Dalzel's career brought a dramatic improvement in his fortunes. He left Edinburgh without graduating, as was the common practice at the time, and found

¹⁴³ R. B. Sher *Church and the University in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1985) p 120.

¹⁴⁴ It has not been possible to track down the register of theological students at Edinburgh for the period in question.

¹⁴⁵ Dr Alexander Adam (1741-1809) was the son of a tenant farmer, attended Edinburgh University for three years and then became tutor to the family of Mr Kincaid, later Lord Provost of Edinburgh. In 1768 he became Rector of the High School and dramatically improved the quality of teaching.

¹⁴⁶ C. Innes *Memoir of Andrew Dalzel* (Edinburgh, 1862) p. 9.

employment as private tutor to the two sons of Lord Lauderdale, James and Thomas Maitland.¹⁴⁷ It is hard not to see the hand of Rev. Dr Drysdale in all this. His duties included accompanying them as they attended Edinburgh High School and also coaching them in the Classics.¹⁴⁸ Dalzel's particular charge was the eldest son, James, who was to become the eighth earl.¹⁴⁹ The Maitland Muniments hold letters which give a clear picture of Dalzel's duties as a tutor to the family; 'Lord Maitland and Mr Thomas (his brother) entered into the fencing today and will begin riding tomorrow'.¹⁵⁰ Dalzel's other duties, apart from supervising his pupil's progress at Edinburgh, were to accompany him to Paris in 1774, where he and James witnessed the funeral of Louis XV at Notre Dame, but afterwards took in dancing and fencing lessons.¹⁵¹ More importantly, in the summer of 1775 tutor and pupil spent a term at Trinity College, Oxford. Dalzel was not impressed by Oxford college life: 'very little study goes on at Oxford except amongst a few bookworms...dissipation, idleness, drinking and gambling are to be learned there'.¹⁵² James Maitland completed his studies at Edinburgh in 1776, and then was sent to Glasgow to attend the lectures of John Millar.¹⁵³

In early December 1772 the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the Council¹⁵⁴ received the following communication from Robert Hunter, Professor of Greek at the university and then aged seventy-two:

¹⁴⁷ Neither Adam Smith, nor David Hume nor Thomas Carlyle bothered to graduate.

¹⁴⁸ This pattern of private tutors accompanying their charges at school was common at schools such as Eton but seems much less so in Scotland.

¹⁴⁹ James Maitland was one of the most colourful Scottish aristocrats of his time. After completing his education at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Oxford he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1780. In the same year he became MP for the seat of Newton in Cornwall. He was a close friend of Charles Fox. In 1792 he visited France during the Reign of Terror and after his four month sojourn there became a convinced Jacobin adopting their dress, tonsure and language. Due to this he became known as 'Citizen Maitland'.

¹⁵⁰ Lauderdale Papers Bundle 40/101773 Letter dated April 28th 1773.

¹⁵¹ Innes *Memoir* pp.12-13.

¹⁵² Ibid p.14.

¹⁵³ John Millar (1735-1801). After studying at the University of Glasgow he became tutor to the family of Lord Kames, during which time he became a close friend of David Hume. By the influence of the Duke of Hamilton he became Professor of Law at Glasgow in 1761.

¹⁵⁴ The composition of the Edinburgh council was as follows: Lord Provost, Baillies (4), Dean of Guild (1), Treasurer, Former Provost, Old Baillies (4), old Dean of Guild, Old Treasurer/College Treasurer, Merchant Counsellors (3), Trades Counsellors (2), Council Deacon, Convenors (5) and Extraordinary Council Deacons (14) Source *Scots Magazine* October 1797.

Having for about ten years given private Colleges in the Greek language in the City of Edinburgh and after that being invited by the Honbl. Magistrates to the profession of Greek in the university, I accepted of it, tho' at that time and for several years after without salary¹⁵⁵... having continued for thirty years...But being now advanced in years...I would gladly hope that when my past services are considered, the proposal I have to make will meet with your approval. There is a gentleman Mr Andrew Dalziel present tutor to the Earl of Lauderdale's sons - with whose character many of the professors are acquainted and from whom he can have the most ample recommendations, who upon being conjoined with me in the office...I humbly beg leave to resign said office.

The Corporation considered the request and 'The matter was remitted to the Principal of the university and the Faculty of Arts [and] to report with respect to Mr Dalzel's qualifications.'¹⁵⁶

The College Minutes of December 10th 1772 recorded the discussion of the contents of Hunter's letter and agreed that a committee of Principal Robertson, Professors Hamilton [Divinity], Stuart [Humanity] and Ferguson [Moral Philosophy] were

to meet at 12 o'clock (on Friday 14th December 1772) in the Guard Hall as a Committee of that number to examine Mr Dalzel as to take trial of his knowledge in Latine and the Greek languages.¹⁵⁷

The Corporation Minutes for December 16th record that this academic committee

¹⁵⁵ This can only mean Hunter is 'without salary' from the university but in receipt of the students' fees.

¹⁵⁶ Edinburgh Corporation at that time consisted of merchants (burgesses) and tradesmen (citizens). In 'full' or extraordinary council meetings there were 17 burgesses and 16 citizens eligible to be present. In 'ordinary council' which dealt with the day-to-day affairs of Edinburgh the ratio between the two groups was 17 to 28. It was the merchants who controlled the posts of Lord Provost, Baillie and Treasurer. But it has to be stated that the real power was held by 'the men above' figures like the Duke of Argyll, Lord Bute and Dalziel's patron, Lauderdale. These men gave 'protection, patronage and parliamentary influence', R. B. Sher 'Moderates, Managers and Popular Politics in Enlightenment Scotland: The "Drysdale Bustle" of the 1760s', in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, eds. J. Dwyer, R. A. Mason and A. Murdoch, (Edinburgh, 1982) p. 180

¹⁵⁷ Edinburgh University Special Collections, College Minutes 1772 p.220. William Robertson (1721-1793) divine, historian and Principal of the University (1762-1793). He was the leader of the 'Moderate' faction within the Kirk.

took trial of Mr Dalzel's knowledge in the Greek and Latin languages at considerable length. He read and explained several passages of different Latin and Greek authors, in prose as well as in verse....gave satisfactory answers to the questions proposed.....[the Faculty of Arts] unanimously offer it as their opinion that [he is] well qualified for the office of Professor of Greek.

On December 23rd in front of the whole Corporation, Dalzel

gave the oath de fidei [of the faith] and qualified by swearing the oath of allegiance and signing the same with the assurance to His Majesty King George.¹⁵⁸

The final ritual was an Act of Council:

We (Lord Provost, Baillies, Deans of Guild, Treasurer and Deacon of Crafts) being satisfied of the Loyalty, Literature, Ability and Good Qualifications of the said Mr Robert Hunter and Mr Andrew Dalzel—Nominate and Constitute and Appoint (Hunter and Dalzel) to be joint Professors of Greek in the University of this City with the right of the longer liver to be sole Professor in the said University.¹⁵⁹

But things were not quite as straightforward as these records suggest: far from simply agreeing to share the post of Professor, Hunter had, in fact sold the post to Dalzel for £300 and a life rent of the salary.¹⁶⁰ But Dalzel could not have secured the position without the help of Lord Lauderdale:

I am under very great obligations to Lord Lauderdale and will do everything in my power to serve him. I could not have procured the office without his interests with the Magistrates who are the patrons.¹⁶¹

Crucially, the Maitland family lent Dalzel the £300 necessary to buy this post: 'The bond lies before me for £300 by Andrew Dalzel to Mr Robert Hunter joint Professor of Greek with me.' The note gives the address as Hatton, the then family seat of the Maitland

¹⁵⁸ Edinburgh City Archives Town Council Minutes Vol. 90 pp.75-76.

¹⁵⁹ Edinburgh City Archives McLeod Bundle COO1.

¹⁶⁰ This was not an unusual occurrence at Scottish universities of the time, three years later George Stuart came to a similar arrangement with John Hill over the Chair of Humanity at Edinburgh. Andrew Ross, Professor of Humanity at Glasgow (1706-1735), did the same with his son, George.

¹⁶¹ Letter to his brother John dated February 6th 1773 C. Innes *Memoir* p.12.

family. The Earl of Lauderdale is named as 'cautioner' and the bond was paid and discharged May 16th 1776.¹⁶²

.There have survived several eye-witness accounts of Dalzel's teaching methods which may provide some clues as to the reasons for his success, for example his most famous pupil, Sir Walter Scott, describes his brush with Dalzel:

At the Greek class I might have made a better figure, for Professor Dalzel maintained a great deal of authority, and was not only himself an admirable scholar, but always deeply interested in the progress of his students. But here lay the villainy! Almost all my companions had left the High School at the same time as myself, had acquired a smattering of Greek before they came to College. I, alas, had none: finding myself far inferior to all my fellow students, I could hit upon no better mode of vindicating my equality than by professing my contempt for the language...I had the audacity to produce a composition in which I weighted Homer against Ariosto and pronounced him wanting in the balance...The wrath of the Professor was extreme...He pronounced upon me the severe sentence that dunce I was and dunce I would remain...which however, my excellent and learned friend lived to revoke over a bottle of Burgundy, at our Literary Club at Fortune's, of which he is a distinguished member.¹⁶³

A different portrait is painted by another former student of Dalzel's, Lord Cockburn:

At the mere teaching of a language to boys he was ineffective. How is it possible for the elements, including the very letters, of a language be taught to a hundred boys at once by a single lecturing professor? Nevertheless, though not a good schoolmaster, it is a duty and delightful to record Dalzel's value as a general exciter of boy's minds. Dugald Stewart alone excepted, he did me more good than all the other instructors I had. Mild, affectionate, simple, an absolute enthusiast about

¹⁶² Ibid p.9 £300 was a vast sum, fifty years later a Scottish parochial school teacher would earn on average £47 a year.

¹⁶³ J.G. Lockhart *Memoir of the Early Life of Sir Walter Scott* in Lockhart's *The Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1893) p 12.

learning, particularly Greek: with innocence of soul and manner which imparted an air of honest kindness to whatever he said or did and a slow soft formal voice, he was a great favourite with all boys and with all good men.¹⁶⁴

Remarkably, a student notebook record of Dalzel's class has survived, written by a John Borthwick who seems to have attended Edinburgh in the 1790s. It begins with *Some Dictates on Greek Propositions being a Contraction of Mr Dalzel's Fragments*. There are sixteen pages on the rules of grammar written in Latin, e.g. *De modo infinitivo* [concerning the infinitive form], Then follows a list of the vacation reading list: Gospels, Iliad (I and II), Gillies' *History of Greece*, *The Spectator*, *The Rambler*, Robertson's *History of Scotland*, Thompson's *The Seasons*, Wharton's *Douglas*, Mrs Burney's *Evelina*, Johnston's *Rasselas*, Greek and Latin unseens as well as passages in English to be translated into both Latin and Greek. There is then a section dealing with the history of the Roman Senate and a table of Greek verbs. The notebook closes with a translation from Fenelon's *Telemaque*. A demanding schedule requiring competence in four languages: two ancient, two modern.¹⁶⁵

But perhaps the most vivid portrait of Dalzel's teaching is provided by the man himself. This is to be found in a series of his lecture notes, edited and published after his death by his son John. They form a course of 37 lectures on Greek and Roman history and letters but also included lessons on European literature from the Renaissance up until the Professor's own day. As his son points out:

He [Andrew Dalzel] never intended publication [for these lecture notes] and consequently the manuscripts received from him no preparation whatever with that view. The editor has endeavoured, in some measure to remedy that defect, though

¹⁶⁴ H. Cockburn *Memorials of His Time* (Glasgow, 1910) pp. 17-18.

¹⁶⁵ Edinburgh University Special Collections Gen. 842. Although catalogued as *Andrew Dalzel's Lecture on Greek*, this clearly is not the case.

conscious, at the same time, how unequal he is to the proper accomplishment of his object.¹⁶⁶

Dalzel's manifesto or call to arms for classics in Scotland was to fight the current fashions in the teaching of classics in Scottish schools:¹⁶⁷

the dry and repulsive communication of the Latin language. This they [the pupils] were forced to learn by means of severe corporal discipline; and hardly any attempt was made to lead the youthful mind to a gradual perception of the beauty of classic diction and sentiment...[he] had to do away with the repugnance acquired at school to classical study.¹⁶⁸

More dangerously, politically, Dalzel hoped that he:

may be infusing into the breast of ingenuous youth...some portion of the fervour of amor patriae...and towards exciting in it an early indignation at all oppression in government.¹⁶⁹

He is even more specific in his final lecture ('The British Constitution') and indeed more reckless:

We cannot help observing that the House of Commons has not always been so ready as it ought to counter the increasing influence of the crown. There is something very defective in the manner of electing representatives of towns or burghs in Scotland: the members are elected by magistrates, among whom, being few in number corrupt influences can easily be exerted; and the individuals thus elected cannot well be called the object of the people's choice.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ A Dalzel *Substance of Lectures* (Edinburgh, 1821), pp. xiii-xiv The lectures were optional and offered to the Second Year Greek class.

¹⁶⁷ When the *Substance* was printed in 1821 it attracted a frosty but anonymous notice from the *Edinburgh Review*: 'When we see the tutors of the English Universities with not a fourth of the emolument, dedicating seven or eight hours a day for more than half the year, to the business of tutoring, we must think rather hard that a Scotch Professor, with an ample income, honourable rank, and six months vacation, cannot do as much to promote the cause of Greek Learning in his native country' *Edinburgh Review* July 1821 pp. 302-314. The reviewer was Daniel Kyte Sandford, Professor of Greek at Glasgow, who does not seem to have followed his own advice when in office.

¹⁶⁸ Preface, Dalzel *Substance* Vol. 1 pp. xv-xvi.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid Vol. 1 p. x.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid Vol. 2 pp.478-479

In terms of classical teaching Dalzel challenges what may be regarded as the Oxbridge approach to classics which he rejects and dismisses as:

that bastard sort confined to philology and verbal criticism, and overlooking all fine taste, and beauty of composition, was wont to be known by conceited talk and a pedantic air.¹⁷¹

This final point sets out for the first time the battle that is to reverberate for the next 100 years as to what the true role of classical teaching should be, but also, and more importantly, the distinct and different attitude to the classics north of the Tweed. Dalzel's Scottish contemporaries were in little doubt as to his ambitions:

Classical learning had fallen into great neglect in Edinburgh when Mr Dalzel assumed his chair....Professor Moor, one of the most profound and accurate scholars of the age, was raising the celebrity of Glasgow University, and while the Foulises were printing at their press at that city the most beautiful editions of the Greek classics, the literati of Scotland's capital were dedicating their whole attention to the civilisation of English and French literature, it became, therefore the anxious desire of Professor Dalzel to rescue the taste for ancient learning.¹⁷²

Dalzel's reputation as a Greek scholar did not rest solely on his thirty year career as a teacher but on his publications supporting the study of Greek. The book, published in 1785 that established Dalzel's reputation outside the Edinburgh lecture hall was the *Analecta Graeca Minora ad Usum Tironum*¹⁷³ [Greek Collection for Beginners]. Dalzel sets out quite clearly his objective in the *Praefatio*:

Quum Collectanea Graeca, quorum tomus prior nuper prodiit, ad usum Juventutis Academica supereroris ordinis adornata essent, nec nisi ab iis, qui mediocrem

¹⁷¹ Ibid Vol. 1 p. vii. This was fighting talk from a man who counted Richard Porson as a friend.

¹⁷² *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*. First edition edited by Robert Chambers and revised by Rev. T. Thomson (Edinburgh, 1875) Vol. 1 p. 438.

¹⁷³ A letter from Dalzel dated Sunday March 6th 1785 to Liston informs him that 'the labour of years', his prose volume of his Greek collection 'was published yesterday; the price 7s 6d', *Memoir* p.48. The book was 'often reprinted' Dictionary of National Biography (1885-1900), Vol. V p.147, hereafter DNB. The author of the DNB entry was the Unitarian minister Alexander Gordon.

saltem progressum in huius linguae nobilissimae studio iam fecerunt, commodie perlegi possint alter libellus, eiusdem sere generis, minoris tamen molis, atque ad usum juniorum Discipulorum accommodatior, adhuc desiderari videbatur.¹⁷⁴

[*Collectanea Graeca*, of which the first volume has recently appeared, was designed for the higher classes of students, especially for those who, having made moderate progress in the study of this noblest of languages, are able to read it fluently. A second book seemed to be needed, of roughly the same kind, but of less bulk, and accessible to younger students.]

The book presents a series of graded exercises in Greek prose (Aesop, Hierocles, Lucian, Plutarch and Xenophon) the necessary furniture of an educated mind ‘nemo, litterarum politioribus imbutus, hospes esse debet’ [no-one cognizant with elegant literature should be unfamiliar] This book was intended to give the able student a ‘tool-kit’ in Ancient Greek, if he mastered these extracts then he could go on under his own efforts and read the complete works. This illustrates what, either by necessity, desire or both, was to become the Scottish teaching tradition in Greek in the nineteenth century.

The *Minora* was a great success and what seemed to make it unique was it provided for students a detailed *apparatus criticus*: the 100 pages of text were more than matched by Dalzel’s comments on grammar and problematic readings; a Greek dictionary was appended with the definitions given in Latin.¹⁷⁵ The work was ‘greatly esteemed by scholars and educationists.’¹⁷⁶ This book was clearly aimed at the Scottish undergraduate market and the English public schools. The fact that it did reach the Scottish student market is attested by the existence of a slim volume published in Edinburgh in 1815: *A Literal Translation of Nearly the Whole of Dalzel’s Collectanea Minora*, with a note on the

¹⁷⁴ To his friend Liston he was little less spiritual: ‘If I do not make a £100 of it I shall be very ill rewarded for my labour’ *Memoir* p. 48.

¹⁷⁵ D. K. Sandford *Greek Extracts With Notes And Lexicon: For The Use Of The Junior Greek Class In The University Of Glasgow* (Edinburgh, 1837) is I think the first Scottish text book to break with this tradition, Sandford supplied notes in English.

¹⁷⁶ A Grant *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during its First Three Hundred Years* Edinburgh Vol. 2 p 325.

frontispiece ‘Sold by the booksellers of Edinburgh Glasgow, Aberdeen and St Andrews’.¹⁷⁷ The *Minora* went through six life-time editions and was adopted by such English public schools as Charterhouse, Westminster and Richmond School [Yorkshire]. It was also to be found in the library of the greatest English Greek scholar of the day, Richard Porson.¹⁷⁸ By 1826, as the Royal Commission Survey revealed, it was the set text in most of Scotland’s universities.

The next obvious step, for Dalzel, was to produce a more advanced selection including extracts from the Greek poets and dramatists; this appeared in 1797 and was entitled: *Collectanea Graeca Majora ad Usus Academicæ Juventutis Accommoda cum Notis Philologicis* [Anthology of Major Greek Works adapted for the Use of Undergraduates with Philological Notes]. The *Majora* contains the complete text of *Medea* and also extracts from Homer [*Odyssey*], Apollonius of Rhodes, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Sappho and the *Greek Anthology*. Again the book was well received: an anonymous reviewer in the *Edinburgh Review* noted:

we are happy in having the opportunity of recommending a work which promises to diffuse the knowledge and love of Greek learning which initiates the student in the arcana of the Muses, and tends in the most effectual manner to preserve a respect for those venerable monuments, to the existence of which we owe almost everything noble and beautiful in the productions of modern genius.¹⁷⁹

The fame of this book spread beyond the shores of Britain; in the newly founded republic of the United States it was adopted by Harvard, Columbia and Yale; part of the diaspora of ideas flowing from Enlightenment Scotland. In 1820 a three volume edition appeared combining *Minora* and *Majora*.

¹⁷⁷ University of Glasgow Special Collections B f 70-d15.

¹⁷⁸ *A Catalogue of Part of the Library of the Late Richard Porson Leigh and Sotheby on Friday June 16th 1809*. Item 412. University of Glasgow Special Collections Mu 36-d17.

¹⁷⁹ *Edinburgh Review* Vol. 2 (April-July 1803) pp. 215. The reviewers were William Stevenson an Edinburgh classical master and Thomas Wright the Elder, a Ludlow bookseller.

On October 23rd 1805 Edinburgh Council received the following letter from Dalzel, now aged sixty-three:

My Lord, the present state of my health being such as to oblige me to withdraw from the duties of the Greek professorship - and being apprehensive that a temporary substitute might not possess that authority which is requisite for maintaining due order among numerous classes of young students which might prove highly detrimental to the University, the promoting of whose interests has been the favourite object of my life.

The Council Minutes then record that

having read recommendations from Lord Meadowbank, Professors Dugald Stewart, Finlayson, Moodie, Brown, Dr Henry Grieve, Mr Alex. Christison and from several other professors of distinction and high literary character recommending in strong terms Mr George Dunbar as in every way qualified to fill the Chair of the Professor of Greek of this University and having considered the long and meritorious services of the said Andrew Dalzel and his present infirm state of health agree to report as their opinion to the Council that it is for the Interest of the University, the effective operation of the Act in Council 7th March 1798 should on the present occasion be suspended and that Professor Dalzel's resignation be accepted...and that George Dunbar be appointed joint Professor of Greek at this University with the right of survivorship, reserving to Professor Dalzel the salary of the office during his life.¹⁸⁰

Dunbar's initial advancement, just like Dalzel's, owed everything to an influential patron. He was born to very humble parents and after studying at Edinburgh University became the tutor to the family of one of the most important men in Edinburgh, Sir William Fettes.¹⁸¹ Just as Dalzel owed his initial advancement to Lord Lauderdale, so Dunbar owed his to Fettes' influence.

¹⁸⁰ Edinburgh City Archives, Edinburgh Council Minutes Vol. 144 pp. 251-252

¹⁸¹ Sir William Fettes (1750-1836) made a fortune twice over supplying the British Army with groceries in the Napoleonic Wars, then as a merchant banker in Edinburgh. He was twice Lord Provost (1800, 1801).

Despite holding the professorship for forty-five years, Dunbar's name does not usually figure in the history of Scottish Victorian classics: he lacked scholarship of his predecessor or the gift for self promotion of his successor. He followed the normal path of the Scottish professor of Greek or Humanity: lecturing to large classes and producing textbooks for his classes and the wider audience of those studying Greek outwith the Edinburgh lecture hall. He certainly took a keen proprietorial interest in the sale of his own text books:

after receiving his dole of three guineas Dunbar's first question was

'Have you got ma' Grammar?' And his second was 'Have you got ma'

Dictionary?' And the student who could not answer in the affirmative was told that possession of these books was essential to his progress.¹⁸²

The sale of these books would have added just over £100 to Dunbar's annual salary if all had purchased them. It is extremely difficult to know what the rewards were for these Professors who wrote for the student market. One clue is perhaps given in the Correspondence Book of the Edinburgh publishers Constable. In March 1818 they contacted Dunbar agreeing to reprint the *Majora* edited and expanded by the professor; the print was to be '2,000 or 1,500 copies....dividing with you the profits'.¹⁸³ This clearly did not satisfy Dunbar for five days later the publishers wrote to him saying 'we fear we cannot offer you more than one hundred pounds for an edition of 2000 copies...[it] will take many seasons to make the impression pay'.¹⁸⁴

Dunbar's one foray into pure scholarship was met with scorn by at least one reviewer. In 1827 Dunbar published his *An Inquiry into the Structure and Affinity of the Greek and Latin Languages with Occasional Comparisons of the Sanskrit and Gothic*; what he was attempting to prove was that Sanskrit was derived from ancient Greek. This was too much for the anonymous reviewer in the *Westminster Review*: 'Mr Dunbar...seems unwilling to

¹⁸² W. S. Dalgleish 'In the Fifties' *The Student* (Edinburgh, 1896-1897) Volume 11 pp 38-43.

¹⁸³ Constable *Letter Book* (NLS) MS 790 No 140.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid No 143. If Constable's did sell the whole print run, say, at seven shillings this would have created a gross income of £700 to be shared between the publisher, booksellers and the editor, Dunbar may have had a point.

forgo any opportunity of mistake'.¹⁸⁵ Not content with that barb, the same critic pours scorn on Dunbar's ability to write correct English 'On opening any of the volumes, the first thing that strikes us is a surprising ignorance of the English language'.¹⁸⁶ But also, and possibly the most hurtful charge, was to dismiss Dunbar's Latinity: "'Expedienda possunt" is quite new to us, and we suspect is no where to be found save in the Edinburgh dialect of the Latin tongue'.¹⁸⁷

Dunbar's later years were devoted to one public controversy after another: in October 1847 a series of seven anonymous articles began to appear in the *Scotsman* and the *Scottish Press* entitled 'The Scottish Universities'.¹⁸⁸ In essence the writer criticises two aspects of Scottish university education: the low ability of many of the entrants and the poor quality of Scottish university teaching. The nature of the attack can be best summarised by quoting from Article No. 2:

If academical education in any country be low...as in Scotland confessedly it stands very low...it were a very shallow philosophy which should lay the blame at the door of the professors. There must be something grievously wrong in the general atmosphere before the air of the University can become so tainted and specially the learned corporations of a country – the church, the bar and the medical profession - must have been culpably lax in their intellectual demands before such a laxity in academical training as Scotland exhibits could become possible...An unlearned church...is favourable to an unlearned university. The mediocrity of the one supports and strengthens the mediocrity of the other. So it has been in Scotland...the universities of our country ... [have] like Esau sold their

¹⁸⁵ *Westminster Review* 'Greek Literature in Scotland' Vol. XVI January 1832 p 95. The anonymous reviewer was John Stuart Blackie; thereafter he and Dunbar became very bitter and very public enemies.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 98.

¹⁸⁸ The tradition in nineteenth century letters to the press was to use a nom de plume and there were of course no by-lines for journalists.

birthright for a mess of pottage. They have done this by condescending...to do the work of schools.¹⁸⁹

All this was too much for the Professor of Humanity, Pillans, and the Professor of Greek at Edinburgh: both went on the attack against the anonymous author. Pillans published a pamphlet *A Word for the Universities of Scotland and a Plea for the Humanity Class at Edinburgh*, and Dunbar did so also *A Defence of the Junior Humanity and Greek Classes in the University of Edinburgh*.¹⁹⁰ Dunbar begins by dismissing the claims of the attacker:

In Mr Blackie's judgement all the Universities of Scotland are in the lowest state of degradation. Except Marischal College, Aberdeen¹⁹¹ ... When I attended the College of Edinburgh under my predecessor, than whom a more amiable man and a better teacher never existed, the higher authors, such as Thucydides, Demosthenes, Plato, Aeschylus and Aristophanes were scarcely ever read; but a scanty knowledge of prosody obtained. The impartial and conscientious author of these letters in the Scottish Press may not know or may not choose to acknowledge, that portions of all these writers are read in my third class, and other exercises are regularly performed.¹⁹²

Then in a series of four letters Dunbar attempts to dismiss the attacks on the quality of Scottish undergraduates and their tutors. He notes that:

Some of the Royal Commission entertained this opinion (that the teaching of elementary classics and mathematics be confined to the best schools) and it was strongly and repeatedly urged upon me, in the course of more than one examination before them. It will be observed, from what Professor Pillans has stated in his pamphlet, that they saw reason to depart from the opinions previously entertained, and they left these elementary classes in the same situation that they found them.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ *The Scotsman*, November 27th 1847p.4.

¹⁹⁰ Published by MacLachlan, Stewart & Co., the University's printers, in 1848.

¹⁹¹ Where Blackie was, since 1839, Professor of Humanity.

¹⁹² *A Defence* pp.3-6.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, Letter 1 p.12

Then in typical Dunbar fashion he enlarges on the *ad hominem* approach:

The writers of the letters in the Scottish Press and the Scotsman shew as much ignorance of the Latin and Greek Classes in this University, and what is done in them, as if they had been newly imported from the woods of Kentucky, or the banks of the Elbe.¹⁹⁴

Dunbar then proceeds to recite the classical set texts used and insist that:

The candidates are required to give up written translations of passage selected by the respective professors from those authors, together with answers to different questions proposed by them, and may be subject to viva voce examinations.¹⁹⁵

He describes why young men come to Scotland's universities:

It may be asserted with truth, that the classes in the Faculty of Arts are mainly supported by young men studying either for the Established Church, or, in connection with the different bodies of Dissenters. A few have no higher object than to become teachers. Destroy the church and you annihilate the universities. To be able to calculate their accounts and sum up their ledgers is all the information and manufacturers require of their sons. The years spent in obtaining some knowledge of Latin and Greek are set down as *loss* not *profit* in their balance sheet. Our aristocracy lend us little aid or support. They send their sons to be educated at the great schools and universities of England, perhaps supposing that with us they would be contaminated by coming in contact with plebeian youth, and could not reach that high pitch of knowledge communicated by southern scholars.¹⁹⁶

Dunbar in the final letter ends typically on a patriotic, not to say xenophobic, note:

With regard to the appointment of English professors in Scotland, I also have a few words to say. In former times, the English complained loudly that their country was inundated by Scottish adventurers, who, some way or other, obtained situations of

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, Letter II p 17

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, Letter II p 20

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p.23

profit and trust, to the great annoyance and indignation of John Bull. Of late years the tables have been completely turned, and several offices of considerable emolument in Scotland are now held by Englishmen.¹⁹⁷ But was it ever known that a Scottish student, who had gone through the regular curriculum, and also taken the degree of Master of Arts was ever appointed a tutor or a professor at an English university? While our academies and colleges are laid open to English students, theirs are hermetically sealed against us. Some fools among us clamour for the abolition of tests. Does it never occur to these wiseacres that Scottish students however distinguished, are effectually barred from honours and professorships in the English Universities, unless they resolve to conform to the Church of England, to keep certain terms and undergo certain examinations? Do our wise patrons of academies and colleges require similar attendance and examination from English candidates for professorships?¹⁹⁸

Dunbar's career ended in ignominy when he was revealed to be not just a weak scholar but a plagiarist.¹⁹⁹

As an example of unalloyed vanity it would be difficult to improve on the following passage written by Dunbar's successor to the Edinburgh chair:

This was the event for which I had been preparing long and of course it did not take me by surprise. I wanted to exchange Latin for Greek, copper for gold to one whose natural tendencies led to him to prefer philosophy and poetry to politics and jurisprudence. Besides, as a scholar, Edinburgh was headquarters to a man who was too much of a Scot to wish for any advancement out of Scotland and too long

¹⁹⁷ Lushington (Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge) was appointed to the Glasgow Chair of Greek in 1838. His predecessor Sandford was a Baliol man and Lushington's successor Richard Jebb was, like him, a Cambridge 'Apostle'.

¹⁹⁸ *Defence* p. 27

¹⁹⁹ See M. Morris 'Sneaking, foul-mouthed, scurrilous reptiles': The Battle of the Grammars, Edinburgh 1849-50' in *Classical books. Scholarship and Publishing in Britain since 1800*. ed. C. Stray, (2007)

trained in auto-didactic freedom to fit easily into educational machinery be-south of the Tweed.²⁰⁰

Thus John Stuart Blackie looks back at the age of 60 on his election to the Chair of Greek at Edinburgh 18 years before. Blackie career as a classicist is a curiosity: after his classical training in Scotland and Germany he produced little work of any lasting scholarly worth. There was no second act in Blackie's career.²⁰¹ The key problem that weakened the cause of Greek studies in Scotland, he believed, was: 'at present they [pupils] are handed over to the Professor before the Schoolmaster has finished his work upon them'.²⁰²

Blackie was educated at Marischal College and first considered the ministry to be his future. This ambition faltered and he spent 1829 studying under distinguished scholars at Gottingen and Berlin; this fact alone sets him apart from all his Scottish peers. Returning to Scotland he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh. In 1839, largely due to his father's influence and political connections, he became the first Professor of Humanity at Marischal College, Aberdeen. He defeated for this post a much better teacher Dr James Melvin, Rector of Aberdeen Grammar School: 'The matter was declared to be a Whig job, and a Whig job it was.'²⁰³ From his vantage point at Aberdeen, usually through the columns of the *Blackwood's Magazine*, Blackie became the gad-fly of the academic establishment and he repeatedly attacked the poor standards of classical scholarship in all the other Scottish universities.

When the chair at Edinburgh became vacant on the death of Dunbar, in 1851 aged seventy seven, there was an impressive array of applicants: Edmund Lushington, Professor at Glasgow; William Veitch, author of *Greek Verbs Irregular and Defective* (1848); John Conington who had published an admired translation of the *Agamemnon* in 1848; William Smith author of, amongst many other books, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman*

²⁰⁰ Blackie, J. S. *Notes of a Life* Ed. Stodart Walker, A. (1910) p. 157

²⁰¹ 'the less said about Blackie, the better,' was Sir George MacDonald's blunt opinion in his Presidential Address to Scottish classicists; *Classical Association of Scotland. Proceedings 1936-1937* p. 21

²⁰² 'Greek Literature in Scotland' *Westminster Review* Vol. 16 January 1832 p 105.

²⁰³ *Notes* p 118

Antiquities (1842) but as a non-conformist excluded from admission to Oxbridge; Leonhard Schmitz, the translator of Niebuhr (1842) and Blackie himself. Blackie's only serious contribution to scholarship had been a two volume translation of Aeschylus, which crucially won the admiration of Thomas Carlyle.²⁰⁴ Blackie was the least qualified for the post and yet by a mix of parochialism, xenophobia and, post Disruption, religious differences he won the day by one vote, the casting vote of the Lord Provost.²⁰⁵ In post Blackie's career is part of the history of celebrity rather than scholarship: he produced a four volume work on Homer and the Iliad (1866) which was not well regarded. Matthew Arnold's contempt for Blackie's Homeric scholarship was palpable; he thought the Professor was 'as capable of translating Homer as of making the Apollo Belvedere.'²⁰⁶ He did however write a bestseller on morality *Self Culture Intellectual, Physical and Moral: A Vade Mecum for Young Men and Students* (1886). The blunt truth is that Blackie's tenure at Edinburgh could not be compared with his peers' scholastic efforts: Jebb at Glasgow was beginning his *magnum opus* a complete edition of Sophocles; Lewis Campbell at St Andrews was producing ground-breaking work on the dating of the Platonic Dialogues and W. D. Geddes at Aberdeen published an admired edition of the *Phaedo*.²⁰⁷ Quite how lax standards were in Blackie's Greek class at Edinburgh is perhaps best illustrated by the recollections of one of his most famous students, Robert Louis Stevenson:

I cannot say much about Professor Blackie for a good reason... I am the holder of a certificate of attendance in the Professor's own hand, I cannot remember to have been present in the Greek class above a dozen times. Professor Blackie was even

²⁰⁴ It is extremely doubtful whether Carlyle was competent to judge in such a matter

²⁰⁵ For a detailed description of Blackie's election see 'Vivat Blackieas', in S. Wallace, *John Stuart Blackie: Scottish Scholar and Patriot* (Edinburgh, 2006), pp.160-181.

²⁰⁶ Ibid p.198

²⁰⁷ Geddes' claim, never seriously disputed, was that his edition was the first edition of a Platonic dialogue by a Scotsman, educated entirely in his own country.

kind enough to remark (more than once), while in the very act of writing the document above referred to, that, he did not know my face.²⁰⁸

Dalzel's career shows how a man from a modest background but with powerful ecclesiastical and aristocratic patrons could rise to position of academic excellence. He revived the fortunes of Greek at Edinburgh and cemented his reputation with two text books whose fame extended far beyond Scotland. More importantly still, Dalzel introduced the third year Private Class where the most able Greek students could, in an almost a tutorial situation and also very importantly, with the fees waived.²⁰⁹ This model was copied in all other Scottish universities and this advanced class was where Scotland's most able Greek students completed their studies before venturing south. Both Dalzel and Dunbar by teaching and industry revived 'the cause' of Greek studies, but the true disappointment was Blackie who in the end added so little to the achievements of his predecessors. In order to understand the state of the Classics in Scotland at the beginning of the nineteenth century it is necessary to examine the comprehensive account submitted to the 1826 Royal Commission on the Scottish universities.

²⁰⁸R. L. Stevenson, *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: Valima Edition* Vol. XII (London, 1922) 'Some College Memories', pp. 29-30.

²⁰⁹Dunbar was very clear on this point. 'When was it begun? I believe the third [year class] was taught by my predecessor, and not previously.' *Royal Commission Evidence*. Vol. 1 (1837) p. 90.

Chapter Four

‘What exactly do you do?’ The 1826 Royal Commission of Inquiry into the State of the Scottish Universities

‘Eminent teachers are not always the best qualified to determine the course of instruction most suitable for the general interests of society, or to the preparation for particular professions’.²¹⁰

Any investigation of Scotland’s universities in the early nineteenth century must pay full regard to the government’s investigation launched in 1826: it provided the single most comprehensive portrait available of university education north of the Tweed.

The Royal Commission on the Scottish Universities produced four folio volumes of evidence; the Commissioners examined and often re-examined 180 witnesses, and these included nearly every Scottish professor; they made 500 specific requests for written evidence and they also undertook a close examination of every legal document connected with these institutions from their medieval charters of foundation onwards. The Commission was not just dramatic in its scale, but also in its recommendations. When its Report appeared in 1831 it recommended nothing less than a complete overhaul: the creation of new type of university governance; the imposition of a common, national university curriculum which would make a national federated University of Scotland a realistic objective: and, finally, the foundation of a new Scottish university college in Dumfries. The radicalism of these proposals needs little underlining.

The Commission’s Composition and Powers

The leading political force behind firstly the setting up of this inquiry and then re-establishing it, in 1830, after the death of George IV, was Robert Peel. The Commission signed by Peel in July 1826 states that the King had been ‘informed that certain

²¹⁰ *Report by a Royal Commission of Enquiry into the State of Universities of Scotland*, 1831, p. 12, hereafter *Report*.

Irregularities, Disputes and Deficiencies have occurred in the Universities of Scotland, calculated to impair the utility of these Establishments'. The initial timetable was ambitious as those chosen were expected to report back 'on or before January 1st 1828'. George IV died in June 1830 but by October a similarly worded Commission had been reissued, again under Peel's signature.

Reform was in the air in Scotland due to the scandals engulfing not just the universities, but also local and national government²¹¹ as well as the legal system. Leading Scottish Whigs such as Henry Cockburn,²¹² Francis Jeffrey²¹³ and Henry Brougham²¹⁴ campaigned through the pages of *The Edinburgh Review* to persuade the government that immediate reform of Britain's universities was essential. In terms of university reform however there was a fundamental division between those who wished for reform within the Scottish democratic tradition of open entry and those who wished to create a more selective, exclusive, Oxbridge system north of the Tweed.

Initially, 16 Commissioners were selected, eight of whom were Scottish aristocrats, including the Chancellors of all the universities save Edinburgh²¹⁵ plus representatives from the upper reaches of the Scottish bench and the Kirk. Their job was to frame such

Code or Codes of fit and proper Rules, Statutes and Ordinances, for regulating the teaching of Youth and granting degrees.

This they interpreted as embracing eleven areas:

- 1 Investigating all statutes, rules and ordinances now in force
- 2 Management of the universities
- 3 Manner of teaching and all related matters
- 4 Finances management

²¹¹ Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations (1835) This investigation received from Lord Cockburn who was by then Solicitor General for Scotland, 'starkly censorious evidence' K. Miller *Cockburn's Millennium* (1975) p. 48.

²¹² Henry Cockburn (1779-1854) Solicitor General for Scotland (1830), Lord Rector of University of Glasgow (1831) and appointed, in 1834, judge in the Court of Session.

²¹³ Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850), Editor of the *Edinburgh Review* (1802-1829) gave evidence to the Commissioners in Edinburgh. He was elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in 1820

²¹⁴ Lord Brougham was elected as Lord Rector of Glasgow University in 1825.

²¹⁵ Edinburgh because of its unique constitution did not have a Chancellor.

5 Laws, privileges, immunities and fabric

6 Student fees

7 Foundations, mortifications and donations

8 Powers of office bearers

9 Discipline and disposal of revenue

10 Decide all disputes, pleas or controversies

11 'To do all other things belonging to the office of Commissioners for Visiting Universities and Colleges by the Law and Custom of Scotland'

They quickly went to work in 1826, at the first meeting the Solicitor General, Hope, submitted a 'List of Requisitions for Returns and Heads of Inquiry' to be sent out to each of the university senates. This list of 75 questions on all aspects of university administration was adopted at the second meeting, 5 days later, and the Scottish universities were given 22 days to reply and also to supply copies of all relevant charters, documents and balance sheets.

Before the interrogation of witnesses began the Commission sent a circular letter to the Chairmen of every Presbytery in Scotland, its aim being to find out the current state of Scotland's schools. This questionnaire, issued on August 28th 1826 was to be completed within the month. Amongst questions asked were: 'How many years have any of the teachers attended a University? How many pupils at present study Latin? Greek? What Greek grammar is taught? What Latin and Greek classics are read? The returns from 906 parishes provided an important snapshot of the teaching of the classics Scotland's schools.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ The Commissioners ordered a notice to be put up at 'the public entrances to the College of Edinburgh, similarly upon the gate at the College of Glasgow....the public entrance to the Common Hall at the University of St Andrews and on the public entrances to King's College and Marischal (stating) His Majesty's Commissioners for the Visitation of the Universities of Scotland...are ready to hear all concerned in regard to all matters relating to the University and the College...Any communications duly authenticated may be sent to their Secretary, 29 Queen Street, Edinburgh , *Evidence Oral and Documentary Taken and Received by the Commissioners Appointed for the Visiting the Universities of Scotland ,Volume I: University of Edinburgh* (1837) p.15. Hereafter *Evidence*.

Table 4 (a) Parochial Schools Survey 1826
Source: Royal Commission Evidence. (1837) Volume 1 Appendix p. 235

Names of Parishes.	No. of Parishes.	No. of Parishes having established Schoolmasters educated at a University.*					No. of Parishes having only private University Schoolmasters of four years, with the No. of such Schoolmasters within Presbytery bounds.		No. of Parishes without University Teachers.	No. of Latin Pupils.	No. of Greek Pupils.	No. of Pupils at Mathematics.†	No. of Pupils at Geography.‡	No. of Parishes vacant, or from which no Return.
		Four Years.	Three Years.	Two Years.	One Year.	Total of Parishes.	No. of such Parishes.	No. of such Schoolmasters.						
Aberbrothick.....	11	8	..	..	..	8	..	..	3	46	3	31	22	..
Aberdeen.....	16	14	..	..	..	14	..	30	2	437	111	65	164	..
Aberlour.....	5	3	1	..	..	4	..	..	1	25	1	31	1	..
Abernethy.....	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Abertharph.....	5	5	..	..	..	5	..	1	..	52	2	70	2	..
Alford.....	13	10	..	1	..	11	..	1	2	5	..	16	..	..
Annan.....	8	5	2	..	..	7	..	..	1	99	37	54	53	..
Auchterarder.....	15	6	..	2	1	9	..	..	6	55	12	37	102	..
Ayr.....	28	7	4	3	4	18	2	5	8	243	50	45	95	..
Biggar.....	11	2	1	3	1	7	..	..	4	14	1	..	31	..
Brechin.....	14	6	..	..	..	6	..	3	8	133	13	43	57	..
Cairnton.....	6	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	5	14	..	..	20	..
Caithness.....	10	6	..	3	1	9	..	1	1	64	18	19	15	..
Chanonry.....	6	6	..	1	..	6	..	2	..	59	3	28	14	..
Chirnside.....	12	3	1	1	..	5	2	..	5	55	20	76	100	..
Cupar.....	19	8	..	..	..	8	1	3	10	132	13	58	66	..
Dalkeith.....	16	7	..	2	..	9	..	2	5	184	33	29	89	2
Deer.....	13	13	..	..	..	13	..	2	..	79	15	43	28	..
Dingwall.....	8	8	..	..	..	8	..	2	..	68	5	22	22	..
Dornoch.....	9	4	..	..	..	4	..	..	5	30	3	1	..	..
Dumbarton.....	17	7	..	2	1	10	..	3	6	67	3	15	45	2
Dumfries.....	17	..	..	1	5	6	1	2	6	184	38	31	100	4
Dunbar.....	9	6	..	1	..	7	..	3	2	78	18	18	17	..
Dunblane.....	12	4	1	3	..	8	..	2	3	78	22	22	70	1
Dundee.....	15	8	..	..	..	8	..	11	7	132	29	123	247	..
Dunfermline.....	12	3	2	1	4	10	..	4	2	109	15	28	71	..
Dunkeld.....	18	3	..	1	..	4	..	..	14	30	5	6	12	..
Dunoon.....	8	2	..	..	2	4	..	..	4	30	1	3	16	..
Dunse.....	10	1	..	1	5	7	..	1	3	79	21	9	41	..
Edinburgh.....	24	20	1	1	..	22	..	20	8	1398	663	421	1367	..
Elgin.....	9	7	..	..	..	7	..	4	1	114	21	33	33	1
Ellon.....	8	5	..	1	..	6	..	2	2	74	3	18	31	..
Fordoun.....	13	9	1	1	1	12	..	3	1	63	10	48	22	..
Fordyce.....	7	6	1	..	..	7	..	..	..	111	10	149	16	..
Forfar.....	11	5	2	..	..	7	..	5	4	55	5	4	7	..
Forres.....	6	5	..	..	1	6	..	2	..	73	5	9	25	..
Garioch.....	15	14	..	..	..	14	..	3	1	55	..	50	..	..
Glasgow.....	22	20	..	..	..	20	..	..	2	663	181	27	274	..
Haddington.....	15	3	2	1	2	8	..	5	7	131	20	39	105	..
Hamilton.....	14	7	..	3	2	12	..	9	2	130	24	32	46	..
Inverary.....	6	2	..	1	2	5	..	..	1	25	6	..	6	..
Inverness.....	7	3	..	1	1	5	..	3	2	101	23	23	28	..
Irvine.....	18	10	2	1	1	14	..	5	3	199	56	19	119	1
Jedburgh.....	14	4	..	..	..	4	..	..	9	78	20	205	60	1
Kelso.....	10	1	1	..	1	3	..	1	4	42	6	31	25	3
Kincardine O'Neil	14	13	..	..	..	13	..	..	1	35	1	12	1	..
Kintyre.....	12	2	2	1	..	5	..	2	7	56	11	3	42	..
Kirkcaldy.....	15	12	1	..	2	15	..	5	..	104	9	36	40	..
Kirkcudbright.....	16	4	1	2	3	10	..	1	6	137	56	34	70	1
Kirkwall.....	5	..	..	..	1	1	1	1	3	56	8	13	18	..
Lanark.....	11	2	1	4	1	8	3	4	..	106	19	26	312	..
Langholm.....	6	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	5	45	4	1	17	..
Lauder.....	9	4	1	..	..	5	..	..	4	32	4	15	21	..
Lewis.....	4	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	2	21	2	24	11	1
Linlithgow.....	19	9	..	3	4	16	..	4	3	215	34	25	93	..
Lochcarron.....	8	4	..	1	..	5	..	..	2	24	2	8	5	1
Lochmaben.....	13	3	..	1	3	7	..	2	5	93	22	33	28	..
Lorn.....	7	3	1	1	..	5	1	1	1	45	2	..	1	..
Meigle.....	13	5	..	..	..	5	1	2	4	56	2	34	45	3
Mull.....	6	..	1	..	4	5	..	..	..	15	..	4	3	1
Nairn.....	6	3	..	3	..	6	..	..	..	85	15	32	16	..
North Isles &.....	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Paisley.....	19	14	..	1	2	17	..	5	2	347	48	87	287	..
Peebles.....	12	2	2	..	..	4	..	1	4	84	10	14	107	4
Penpont.....	9	3	1	4	1	6	2	1	1	77	26	..	..	..
Perth.....	24	5	..	1	2	8	..	..	16	130	45	..	..	..
St. Andrew's.....	20	11	1	1	2	15	..	2	6	158	19	45	112	..
Selkirk.....	11	1	..	3	2	6	..	..	2	73	25	29	77	3
Sky.....	8	1	..	3	..	4	..	..	4	24	1	..	5	..
Stirling.....	12	6	1	3	..	10	..	7	2	190	71	64	128	..
Stranraer.....	11	1	..	3	2	6	..	..	5	129	13	47	138	..
Strathbogie.....	12	9	1	..	1	11	..	1	1	130	23	56	65	..
Tain &.....	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Tongue.....	4	3	..	1	..	4	..	1	..	20	3	1	5	..
Turreff.....	11	11	..	..	..	11	..	..	..	75	7	215	28	..
Uist.....	4	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	2	19	6	2	8	..
Wigton.....	10	2	3	..	1	6	..	..	2	81	9	12	25	2
Zetland.....	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Total.....	906	411	39	69	66	585	15	179	241	8553	2042	2903	5370	65

University of Edinburgh: The Heart of the Inquiry

Although the Commission was intended to investigate the nation's five universities, it could be argued that this was in many ways a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the capital's university. The statistics support this interpretation: Edinburgh College was made the home of the inquiry and it was here that 97 days of their meetings took place out of a total of 106 days; 83 witnesses were called at Edinburgh, far in excess of elsewhere,²¹⁷ 44 of these were employed by the university; and the evidence published as a result of the Edinburgh questionings is by far the most detailed and lengthy volume created by the Commissioners. If Edinburgh was the problem then it perhaps would provide the solution. The Commissioners began hearing evidence on the September 30th 1826 hearing evidence from officials of Edinburgh Corporation about the state of the university's buildings, but more importantly trying to decide if they could go forward with their inquiry in the light of the fact that the University had taken its dispute with the Corporation to the Lords of Council and Session, Scotland's supreme civil court. They decided that 'His Majesty's Warrant' gave them the necessary powers to proceed. The first academic witness,²¹⁸ heard on October 10th, was George Dunbar, Professor of Greek. He was called first due to the ill health of the Principal, the Very Reverend George Baird.²¹⁹

Lord Rosebery, as the chairman, began proceedings by asking Dunbar some initial questions that became standard for all other academic witnesses: confirming who they were, asking whether they had read the return made by the Senatus Academicus to the 'List of Requisitions for Returns and Heads of Inquiry' and whether the Professor had any suggestions for improvements or further comments to make. Dunbar had three complaints:

²¹⁷ For example Glasgow, Edinburgh's rival and nearest in student population size saw only 33 witnesses called in a nine-day period. It is the depth of the interrogations at Edinburgh which seems so striking. In 1826 Edinburgh had 1905 matriculated students, Glasgow had 1256, Marischal 738, King's 235 and St Andrews 223. The Commissioners spent five days at Aberdeen and St Andrews.

²¹⁸ One puzzling feature of the Edinburgh hearings is the absence of any substantial testimony from one the university's finest academic adornments Sir William Hamilton. This noted metaphysician who when a Snell Exhibitioner at Balliol was described, by Leslie Stephen, as 'the most learned Aristotelian in Oxford', (DNB, Vol. VIII p.1112) appeared before the Commission but 'the Evidence not printed on account of the extensive alteration made by him thereon, when sent for verbal correction-to be re-examined' (*Evidence* Vol.1 p. 9). He was not recalled and the 1831 Final Report gives a fairly anodyne summary of his views.

²¹⁹ Baird was married to the daughter of Edinburgh's Lord Provost.

there were not enough prizes for students, public examinations should be introduced and the Principal, in 20 years, had visited his classroom only once. When asked about how he taught he claimed that the Junior Greek class, some 160 students, were all are tested every week. The fact that the class lasted for a total of 10 hours per week and thus, even if no teaching took place, each student had a weekly examination lasting less than four minutes, may not have escaped the Commissioners' notice. Dunbar was asked about the curriculum and choice of texts:

Are there any regulations of the Senatus Academicus prescribing the course of study or any method of instruction in your class?

None that I know of.

Are there any directions given to you by the Principal of any sort or kind at your induction?

None.

Are you in every matter of that sort left as much to your own discretion, as a private teacher would be?

Yes, entirely.²²⁰

This as will be seen was one of the more significant exchanges between Dunbar and the Commissioners. He was asked too about the Moor's *Greek Grammar*:²²¹

Is the Moor *Grammar* you use in Greek and English, or Greek and Latin?

In Latin and Greek...

Do you think it would be any improvement to use a *Grammar* that should be Greek and English, with a view to further facilitate the acquirement of the Greek tongue?

I consider the rules in Moor's *Grammar* so very simple that any young man who comes to the University should be sufficiently acquainted with Latin to master them without difficulty.

²²⁰ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 98.

²²¹ The 1814 edition in question had been edited by Dunbar.

Dunbar also explained that he did not take a ‘catalogue’ [register], but instead appointed a member of the class to be a ‘Censor’ whose duty was to record any absences. Finally Dunbar insisted that English or Irish students at Edinburgh were no more advanced than their Scottish peers but the best students came from the High School, ‘ my prime students are from the [Edinburgh] High School’.²²² He was recalled as a witness by the Commission in May 10th of the following year, 1827, after a visitation had been made to the University of Glasgow and was asked about the texts he used for his third, the most advanced, Greek class:

[They] read *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, Part of the Oration of Demosthenes for [sic] the Crown’

This was followed by a query about the cost of books for the junior Greek class:

Coll [ectena] 6s-Gram [mar] 5s-Exercises 7s.²²³

They recalled him for a third time later in the month. The questions now were much more pointed:

Are the Elements of Greek taught in your class?

Yes

One object today is to have your ideas as to the propriety of that plan-whether you think it better the Elements should be taught in the first Class, or, whether it should be required of the Students coming to the University that they are previously acquainted with the Elements?

It would certainly save me some trouble, if they were previously taught in some of the public schools; but I apprehend, the Elements of Greek, must continue to be taught in the University.²²⁴

Dunbar’s argument, apart from obvious self-interest in the possible loss of fees of three guineas each from his 160 students, was based on his view that there was not a supply of

²²² *Evidence* Vol.1 p 101.

²²³ *Evidence* Vol.1 pp.485-486.

²²⁴ *Evidence* Vol.1 p. 510.

‘sufficiently well educated teachers’ in the parish schools who could teach Greek. What Dunbar could not have known is the return the Commission had received from its survey of Scottish parochial schools showing that there were over 2,000 pupils studying Greek in the parochial schools. The Commissioners then altered their line of attack by suggesting that six months of beginner's Greek could not possibly give ‘anything like a competent knowledge of Greek.’²²⁵ Surely not even two sessions of six months could produce ‘an adequate knowledge.’ At this point Dunbar seems reduced to bluster:

In that time, if he has tolerable abilities and has paid attention, he may be able to read Xenophon, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* of Homer, perhaps Herodotus; but not the higher authors...and cannot therefore be thought to have a competent knowledge of Greek

Dunbar also bristles when comparisons are made between the quality of his teaching at the University and that at Edinburgh Royal High School: ‘I go over more ground in six months than is done there in nine or ten.’²²⁶ It seems fairly clear that the Commissioners were less than satisfied with Dunbar’s responses. It was perhaps his misfortune that he was the first academic witness called and that the Commissioners were more than ready for him.

James Pillans, Professor of Humanity, was called before the Commission on December 4th 1826 and was asked the standard introductory questions by the Chairman the Lord President, Hope. His confident answers almost defy belief:

Have you seen the questions that were put by this Commission to the Senatus Academicus and the answers that were returned to them?

I have not yet had time to peruse them: a copy may have been sent to my house; but having been absent till within two days of the commencement of the College Session,²²⁷ I have not seen them.

²²⁵ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 511.

²²⁶ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p 512.

²²⁷ Edinburgh’s session began on the last Wednesday in October i.e. five weeks before Pillans’ interrogation.

In the Return, the number of students who attended your class for the two years 1819-1820 and 1825-1826 is not mentioned, but left blank. Can you mention the reason for that?

I went abroad so immediately after the last course that I have not had time to make it out.²²⁸

It is difficult to know what to admire more: the insouciance of Pillans or the patience of the Commissioners. He was then asked whether the relative youthfulness of his Junior Class was a problem. He attempted to turn this query to his advantage; by saying it was not an issue:

I am tempted to mention, as proof of this that the Junior Class, at the moment I am speaking, is at work, writing an exercise I prescribed under the superintendence of a general censor who will collect the results and dismiss them without my reappearing again.²²⁹

He then proceeds to describe the way in which he has introduced the monitorial system, into the University's Junior Humanity Class:²³⁰

I establish soon after the commencement of the session (as I did at the High School)²³¹ a system of Monitors, or Inspectors of Exercises, taking care to select them from amongst the best scholars in the class. Who these are is ascertained by making all write an exercise in the classroom under my own eye. This is generally done in the first week of the session. That it may be a test of different stages of proficiency, the exercise prescribed consists of different parts beginning with the more easy, such as a sentence from Mair's *Introduction*,²³² and advancing to more difficult translation from English into Latin. This first exercise I take into my own

²²⁸ It should not be forgotten that the holidays Pillans mentions lasted six months.

²²⁹ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p.428.

²³⁰ In 1824-1825 153 students were matriculated for this class.

²³¹ Pillans detailed his use of the monitorial system at the Royal High School in his 1856 book *Contributions to the Cause of Education* (1856). In the same work he claims credit for being the inventor of that vital teaching tool, the blackboard (p. 378)

²³² This text written by an Edinburgh schoolmaster was in essence an expanded version, with clear acknowledgement, of Ruddiman's *Rudiments of Latin Grammar* (1714)

hands, mark the errors, and sum them up at the end; so that I am able in the course of two days, to make out a graduated list of students, according to the number of errors they have committed...By this means...I am enabled very early in the session to select a sufficient number, to whom I entrust the charge of correcting and characterising the exercises of the rest.

Pillans would mark these inspectors' efforts discussing 'all those offences against the rules of Latin syntax and grammar'.²³³ The benefit for the student of this system²³⁴ is that all their work is marked promptly:

suppose it has been required to turn a passage of English into Latin, the ink of their version is hardly dry when the various inelegancies and faults of concord and government...are pointed out and corrected

The student is expected to note at the end of the passage these errors and to re-submit the next day a corrected and correct copy. All faults are noted by the monitors who make written reports to Pillans on all errors. The fair copy when produced having passed a second inspection, 'are expected to be carefully preserved and presented in a regular series, sewed or bound together, in order to secure a good certificate'.

He is then asked about composition rendering an English translation back into Latin, this practice he does not adopt. This answer seems to surprise the Commissioners who believe it is 'frequently practised in the English schools'. Pillans a former private tutor at Eton demurs. Pillans, like Dunbar, does not call a 'Catalogue' but unlike Dunbar he presents successful students in his class with a certificate: 'I have this session adopted a method of engraving the formula of a certificate on the back of the class ticket.' The students were graded on three issues: 'regularity of attendance...proficiency and propriety of

²³³ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p.430.

²³⁴ Professor Leslie's (Mathematics) gave an opposite view 'I disapprove of the system of monitors, and am convinced that there is much deception in the machinery that has lately been put in motion' *Evidence* Vol.1 p.133.

behaviour'.²³⁵ But Pillans seems unprepared for the next and perhaps obvious question as to what happens if a certificate is lost:

No I have not hitherto kept any register for each individual case for the reason I have mentioned, that I issued these certificates in rather a hurried way at the close of the session when every student was anxious to get away, and wished to have his certificate immediately. If he applied to me afterwards, I gave him the certificate from general recollection, or from reference to my own notes.²³⁶

He was asked if Latin 'cribs' presented a problem when marking student's works, he believed it did not:

Fortunately....the key in general use, and the only one I have seen, is full of the most egregious blunders; so that one has only to prescribe a sentence in which some of the blunders occur, and as error is infinite and truth is but one, I have a strong presumption...that all those whose exercises agree in committing the error have had unlawful aid.²³⁷

But Pillan's major complaint against his students is not their use of an 'unlawful aid' but their poor articulation:

All my experience in teaching the youth of Scotland, goes to prove that there is no part of education in which they are so deficient, and so little susceptible of improvement, as in the power of pronouncing audibly, and intelligibly ...The habits of pronunciation the students bring with them from all the different counties in Scotland are extremely bad, and so inveterate as to be almost unconquerable. The difference between the Scotch and English boys, in clear, articulate and pleasing declamation, is greater than in any other point connected with a liberal education.²³⁸

²³⁵ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p.435.

²³⁶ *Evidence* Vol.1 p. 436.

²³⁷ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p.437.

²³⁸ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 439

To remedy this 'fault' Pillans started his Senior Humanity class 30 minutes early on Monday, 8.30 am, using the time to improve his students' elocution.²³⁹ But he seemed to be fighting a losing battle for, as he admitted, in the classroom he was forced to use 'the Scotch way' of pronouncing Latin.²⁴⁰

Two other classicists were called by the Commissioners: Dr Aglionby Carson Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, and Rev. John Williams, Rector of Edinburgh Academy.²⁴¹ Both men supplied details of the classical curriculum they taught at each institution. Carson the senior and more distinguished classicist²⁴² was called on October 25th 1827. He had been the Rector of the Royal High School²⁴³ for seven years. The Commissioners were very keen to discover the details of the Edinburgh school's Greek curriculum which Carson informed them included: grammar, the Greek Testament and authors such as 'Thucydides, Herodotus, Demosthenes and at least two Greek plays'.²⁴⁴ This, of course, stood in stark contrast to what Dunbar was teaching and must have reinforced the Commissioners' doubts about the delivery of Greek at Edinburgh University.

Williams²⁴⁵ was interviewed two days later and again the focus was the teaching of Greek. He was very dismissive of the standards at the University of Edinburgh in Greek; for any graduate of his Academy to join Dunbar's Junior Year would be:

²³⁹ The texts appear to be largely extracts from Shakespeare

²⁴⁰ Pillans hostility to the Scots tongue would have annoyed at least one Commissioner if he had been present at the hearing on December 4th, Sir Walter Scott: 'January 25th...the mode of pronunciation approved by Buchanan and Milton and practised by all nations excepting the English...is certainly the best....I wish the cocknified pedant who first disturbed it by reading Emo for Amo and quy for qui had choked in the attempt' *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott 1771-1832* ed. W.E. K. Anderson (Edinburgh, 1998) p 305. Scott was unable to make any significant contribution to the Commission as the year of his appointment as a Commissioner, 1826, witnessed the catastrophic collapse of his fortunes.

²⁴¹ Opened on October 1st 1824 its key sponsors were Lord Cockburn whose original idea it had been, Leonard Horner brother of Francis, John Russell, Sir Walter Scott and inevitably, the great Tory manager, Lord Melville. Edinburgh Corporation bitterly fought this attempt on their monopoly, regarding it as an illegal act which breached the original 'staut and odainit' setting up the High School.

²⁴² He was the author a book on *The Relative Qui, Quae, Quod* (Edinburgh, 1818) that was highly regarded by many classical scholars including Samuel Parr.

²⁴³ 'The High School of Edinburgh may be regarded as the national school of Scotland, its fame attracting pupils to it from every part of the kingdom' W. Steven *History of the High School of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1849) p. 195.

²⁴⁴ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 563

²⁴⁵ John Williams (1792-1858) was a product of Balliol where one of his fellow students was Thomas Arnold. When he became vicar in Lampeter he tutored Sir Walter Scott's second son Charles for a place at Oxford. So impressed was Scott by this tutor that he recommended him to 'several other Scottish gentlemen of distinction' who sent their sons to Wales. J. G. Lockhart *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1893) p 439. According

absolute folly; were he to go to the Second (Class), I believe the instruction, given during the five previous years at the Academy, would prove far more effectual than one year under Professor Dunbar.

There was even a problem with the most advanced, Third Class:

I have made inquiries but I am sorry to say that I cannot get two persons to agree in the account; there is a great deal of confusion, from the private studies.²⁴⁶

Williams experience at the Academy was of a great enthusiasm and appetite for Greek: in 1826 out of a total school roll of 519 only two parents requested that their sons be not taught Greek.²⁴⁷ The contempt that Williams showed for Dunbar and the sophisticated Greek curricula provided by both schoolmasters probably wounded fatally the cause of Dunbar and the other Scottish professors of Greek in the eyes of the Commissioners.

What must have also troubled the investigators was the widespread agreement at the university on the centrality of Greek and Latin but the poor standards in the former language.²⁴⁸

University of Glasgow: the Closed Corporation

Next the Commissioners, in January 1827, visited for a period of five days the University of Glasgow and returned nine months later for a further three days of cross examination. Thus went from one notoriously litigious institution to another. Glasgow's perennial disputes were not, being an independent institution, with the municipal Corporation but with the Crown itself. The university believed that the definitive document in terms of the

to Daniel Thomas: 'His success at Edinburgh was in many ways more remarkable than that of Dr. Arnold at Rugby...for he had to overcome Scottish bias in favour of the purely utilitarian education against the more liberal training of the classics' DNB Vol. XXI p. 428. The D.N.B. has been exploited here and elsewhere in this thesis, rather than the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) for two main reasons: contributors like the Daniel Thomas (1863-1940) had access to eyewitness accounts of Williams, thus he thanks, for example, the help provided to him by Robert Cucliffe (Williams' son-in-law) Professor Lewis Campbell 'and other pupils of Williams,' he is therefore providing a near contemporary portrait of this public figure; also the 2004 Oxford D.N.B. omits details provided in the earlier work; the Oxford DNB retains the Williams entry but in a revised and abbreviated form; the author, Magnus Magnusson, omits the comparison made by contemporaries between Williams and Dr. Arnold.

²⁴⁶ *Evidence* Vol.1 p 582

²⁴⁷ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 583

²⁴⁸ Attacks on the standard of Greek teaching in Scotland had been made before the Commission's investigations began by J. G. Lockhart: 'for these two years, Scotland has produced no man of high reputation, whose fame rested, or rests, upon what we call classical learning'. *Peter's Letters to His Kinfolk* ed. W. Ruddick (Edinburgh, 1977) p. 50

university's management was the charter granted in 1572 by King James VIth, the 'Nova Erectio'. In essence this described and established something every after referred to as 'Glasgow College' but in the process of time a parallel, but separate, corporation had grown up, the 'University of Glasgow'. By the early nineteenth century what this effectively meant was all real power was vested in a body called the 'Faculty' or 'College Committee' not to be confused with the Senatus: the former consisted of a body of 13 the Principal, the Professors of Divinity, Church History, Oriental Languages, Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Logic, Greek, Humanity. Mathematics, Civil Law, Theory and Practice of Medicine, Anatomy and Practical Astronomy and the Senatus comprised of all these men plus the five Regius Professors, the Deans of Faculty and the Rector - it was a corporation within a corporation.²⁴⁹ The Faculty controlled the college's finances, professorial appointments and all examinations.

The interrogation of Glasgow's classical professors was quite cursory in comparison to the treatment given to Dunbar and Pillans. Daniel Keyte Sandford, Professor of Greek, was called first on January 6th and was asked if he had any particular criticisms to make of the Glasgow system. Sandford immediately made a comparison between Oxbridge and Glasgow; the former concentrated too much on 'the cultivation of taste' whereas the Glasgow system in the emphasis given to Logic and Moral Philosophy concentrated too much on what he calls 'composition'. By 'composition' he meant essay writing, often at great length:

In the Logic class...the students in their ambition to obtain the good opinion of their fellow students, by whose votes the prizes are adjudged, are induced to vie with each other very much in length as well as the nature of essays. Essays of a prodigious length are given in.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ What was intended a bulwark against any corruption, the Ordinary Visitors, set up various Charters and the Acts of Visitation, simply did not function in any serious sense. The Visitors consisted of: the Lord Rector who was usually not domiciled in Scotland, the Minister of the High Church of Glasgow, who was also the Principal of the College and the elected Dean of Faculty.

²⁵⁰ *Evidence* Vol. 2 p. 73

A *via media* had to be found. He then makes the usual complaint of the size of the student numbers, over 400, 'No man is equal to such tuition'.²⁵¹ He is opposed to the abolition of the Junior Class as it would deny access to elementary Greek to those who come from rural areas as did the overwhelming majority of his Junior Class. Sandford bitterly complains that he was promised an assistant prior to his appointment in 1821, an offer withdrawn after his installation.

The Professor of Humanity, Josiah Walker, was called on January 6th, ²⁵² the same day as his younger colleague the Professor of Greek.²⁵³ Again the Commissioners' attentions seemed elsewhere but Walker, who had been a student at Edinburgh and a tutor to the Marquis of Tullibardine at Eton, felt compelled to tell the inquiry that the problem in Scotland was simply a lack of an ample supply of classical schoolmasters. When he went to Eton in 1787 the ratio of masters to boys was 30 to 1 but at Glasgow as a Professor, with no assistant, was confronted with 320 students. His evidence thereafter adds little except to outline the texts taught.

University St Andrews: Dead, Dying or Sleeping?

The single issue confronting the Commissioners when they visited St Andrews in July and August 1827 was stark; Scotland's oldest university seemed doomed to extinction given its plummeting matriculation figures. Despite the amalgamation of the two ancient colleges of St Salvador and St Leonard in 1747 to form the United College, the situation seemed terminal; in the 1820s the average number of matriculated students was 220 spread across eight disciplines, less than were studying Greek at Glasgow or Edinburgh. Playing no significant part in the intellectual excitement of the Scottish Enlightenment, Scotland's most collegiate campus seemed drifting to oblivion.

²⁵¹ *Evidence* Vol. 2 p. 74.

²⁵² It is notable that most of the interviews outwith Edinburgh were considerably shorter than those in the capital.

²⁵³ Walker was 66 at the time and Sandford was 27.

This impression was perhaps confirmed on the second day of hearings, August 1st, when the 73 year old, Reverend John Hunter, Professor of Humanity²⁵⁴ was called. He had been in post for 52 years and in his opening statement said he was considering retirement.²⁵⁵ The Professor could not make the same complaint that had been made at Edinburgh and Glasgow about vast classes, when asked about class sizes he replied 'The number of the class is very various.'²⁵⁶ But he echoed their comments about the immaturity of the students; 'I feel it a very great evil that they come too young.'²⁵⁷ But some of his class are men in their thirties who are schoolmasters aspiring to enter the St Mary's College, the Divinity Hall. Hunter said he had always taken great pains to send his most able ex-students to the parochial schools as teachers and as a result he has seen improvement in 'many instances'. Interestingly, the ageing Professor agrees that the teaching of the principles of Greek should be transferred to the schools and this would 'make our Students better Greek scholars.'²⁵⁸ Like Dunbar he did not call a 'catalogue' but simply noted the numbers of the empty benches, each bench seating six students. He does not lament the end of the collegiate student experience:

I believe they [the students] were less orderly, notwithstanding their confinement...They used to meet in their own rooms after prelustration, after the Professors had gone round and they might do what they pleased: or a troublesome young man might make a riot and disturb the studies of others²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴ He was also the University Librarian.

²⁵⁵ He in fact continued in post until 1835 and then became Principal aged 91. He died 2 years later. His remarkable situation raised a serious issue: the inability of Professors to retire due to the lack of an adequate pension, thus the sale of offices. At Glasgow Principal MacFarlane was asked about the problem of infirm and or incompetent professors. He was asked if there were any professors that 'are not competent to teach as well as formerly'. He agreed and said... the Professor of Practical Medicine 'is from age incapable of teaching...this is the second session in which he has been allowed to employ another person to lecture for him. But the temporary intervention of an individual reading his lectures is not found to be effectual for the instruction of pupils'. *Evidence* Vol. 2 p134.

²⁵⁶ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p. 40.

²⁵⁷ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p. 41.

²⁵⁸ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p. 42.

²⁵⁹ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p. 44.

The most interesting part of his evidence is his description of the work of Dr John Gillespie, his 'Assistant and Successor',²⁶⁰ who was also his son-in-law. Gillespie was also a Minister in nearby Cults.²⁶¹ Gillespie followed his father-in-law as a witness and was immediately asked if he intended to retain the living when he was made professor. He said he did and he was then asked if he realised this would be in breach of the law of the General Assembly. Gillespie stoically ploughed on saying he was not yet a professor and anyway the local Presbytery had not challenged him. In all but name Gillespie was the Professor of Greek as he lectured four days a week and Hunter only on one day a week. His main problem was money: all Hunter paid him was £50 a year which was insufficient. Hunter's defended his treatment of his assistant:

Mr Gillespie is a very young man, married, without consulting me a daughter of mine, I obtained for him the Church at Cults and after he had shown himself a literary man...I made application to the Duchess of Portland²⁶²...[whose] answer was favourable and he was finally appointed my Assistant and Successor.²⁶³

Hunter then recalls his years of penury:

my income for more than 30 years (did not) average more than £200 a year. Upon that pittance I not only reared but educated a family of sixteen sons and daughters...three of them still remain with me...one a son who is deaf and dumb.²⁶⁴

Andrew Alexander, Professor of Greek²⁶⁵, was interviewed directly after Hunter. He was firmly of the view that abolishing the basic Greek class would be a disaster at St Andrews as so many students at the university came from parochial Greek-less schools.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁰ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p 43.

²⁶¹ This was some 14 miles from St Andrews and was in the Presbytery of Cupar, which would take in as worshippers Lord Melville and family whose family seat, Melville House, was nearby.

²⁶² The Duke of Portland was the patron of the Chair of Humanity at St Andrews i.e. in was in his gift.

²⁶³ *Evidence* Vol. 3 p. 154.

²⁶⁴ *Evidence* Vol. 3 pp.154-155.

²⁶⁵ There was considerable disquiet about the validity of Alexander's testimonials who had been appointed in 1820 after working at Aberdeen.

²⁶⁶ This doesn't quite tally with facts such as they are, the Commission's parochial returns show Greek being taught in parish schools in the Presbyteries of St Andrews, Perth, Dundee, Cupar and other presbyteries in the St Andrews catchment area

The Universities of Aberdeen

In some ways the task of the Royal Commission at Aberdeen was the most straightforward, for most seemed to agree that a merger of some sorts, as had happened at St Andrews, should take place between King's College and Marischal College which were geographically less than a mile apart from each other; one in the old town and the other in the 'new town'. Respecting its senior status they visited King's College first on September 17th 1827 and spent five days in total in the most northern of Britain's universities. Their first interview was with the Principal the Very Rev. William Jack; his interview was short and troubled. Jack admitted that he did not exercise all the duties of a Principal that he had previously defined to the Commissioners:

Which of those duties, which you consider to belong to your situation, do you not now exercise?

I think the most important is that of admitter. The encroachments on the power of the admitter is perhaps the greatest defect in this University

To what offices do you admit?

The Principal admits the three Regents, the Chancellor of the University, the superior Officers'.²⁶⁷

It then transpired that Jack had clashed with the Senatus over the appointment to the Chair of Humanity, in 1815, where two candidates had come forward, Dr Dewar and Dr Forbes, and because the Senatus²⁶⁸ was not unanimous, Jack overruled their majority verdict. The University took the issue to the Court of Session, where Jack was overruled. Rather unwisely, given that two of Scotland's most senior lawyers, the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General, were sitting across the table from him Jack was highly dismissive of Scotland's highest civil court. He was asked about the Court's verdict:

²⁶⁷ *Evidence* Vol. 4 p. 9

²⁶⁸ The Commissioners must have found it difficult on occasion to penetrate the fog of medievalism that surrounded appointments at King's. This for example, is how the 'Civillist' is appointed; 'The Civillist is elected by the Rector, Procurator Nationum, the Principal Mediciner, Humanist, Subprincipal, three Regents and the Professor of Divinity and Oriental Languages' *Evidence* Vol. 4 p.183.

An interim interdict; the Court knew nothing of the matter. My feeling was to disregard the interdict...No benefit was ever derived from going to a civil court with a College matter; my opinion is, that the superior authorities of the University have full power to decide every College question, and should not be interfered with.²⁶⁹

Moving on from his management techniques he was then asked if he did any teaching and when he replied in the negative it was pointed out that this was contrary to the charter of foundation. For Jack it seems appeals to tradition were highly selective. He then had to admit that all the records for the Visitation of 1619 had been lost. He continued by further admitting he never visited the classrooms. All this produced what must be the *ne plus ultra* of all the Commission questions:

What, in fact, do you do as Principal?

The duties of the Principal are increasing, numerous and important.²⁷⁰

At least one of the professors at King's College considered the Principal to be 'insane.'²⁷¹

The next witness was the Rev. Patrick Forbes who taught Humanity. The curriculum was very Spartan 'the sole class book used is Horace'²⁷² and the teaching of the Junior Class involved two hours a week. No composition work was attempted. He was asked should the hours be increased and he agreed. It is difficult not to feel sorry for Forbes for his teaching duties embraced: Latin, Chemistry, Mineralogy and Geology.²⁷³ For Forbes brightest students a career teaching in England seems the way forward:

At this moment, indeed, a great part of the education of England is carrying on by Scotch young men. I myself have recommended about 35 within these two years²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ Evidence Vol. 4 p. 10.

²⁷⁰ Evidence Vol. 4 p.11.

²⁷¹ Letter October 1820 from Patrick Forbes to Rev. John Lee. Lee Papers, National Library of Scotland (NLS) MS 3434./330

²⁷² Evidence Vol. 4 p. 12.

²⁷³ He also had charge of a parish in Old Machar.

²⁷⁴ Evidence Vol. 4 p. 14.

One of Forbes' pastoral concerns is he seems to suggest rather obliquely the temptations of Aberdeen, for by the end of session some students have acquired 'associations neither favourable to their diligence in acquiring knowledge, nor to their morals.'²⁷⁵

Next was Hugh McPherson Professor of Greek who had he said adopted the Edinburgh system by which he meant Dalzel textbooks were used the, both the *Minora* and the *Majora*. In contrast to the Humanity class which met for only two hours per week, the Junior Greek class met for two and half-hours every day.

On the 21st September 1827 the Commission returned to Edinburgh and devoted their energies to preparing an initial set of proposed reforms. In November 19th 1828 they announced that

Provisional resolutions in regard to a Curriculum of University education, and the preparation connected with it, previous to entering the College.... was [to be transmitted] to each of the several Universities, with a letter, desiring the deliberate opinion of the Senatus thereon.²⁷⁶

The Scottish Classical Curriculum in the 1820s

It is possible, using the evidence that was published by the Commission, in 1837, to create a picture of the state of Classics teaching in Scotland. This can be achieved by using the following elements: the parochial school survey²⁷⁷; the oral and written evidence provided by professors and their Senatus; and finally the decision, clearly as deliberate strategy by the Royal Commissioners, to publish extracts from the current prospectuses of the both the High School of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Academy.

Rosebery's²⁷⁸ request to the Scottish Presbyteries to provide information on the state of Scottish schools²⁷⁹ produced responses from 78 Presbyteries giving returns for 906

²⁷⁵ *Evidence* Vol. 4 p. 22.

²⁷⁶ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p 40.

²⁷⁷ The parochial school survey and the extracts from the Edinburgh schools' prospectuses appeared in Volume 1 of the *Evidence*, the Edinburgh volume.

²⁷⁸ Rosebery appended a note to his circular letter to all presbyteries of August 1827. 'In cases in which no students are actually taught Greek, the Presbyteries are requested to mention whether the schoolmasters are *capable* of teaching Greek' (Rosebery's emphasis) *Evidence* Vol. 1 p 233.

parishes. A few key features emerge immediately: the profession includes two-thirds who have some experience of university education, this leads to another key fact. These men will have attended Junior Greek and Latin classes. The table also shows the strength of Latin in Scotland in 1827, over 8,500 pupils. But the real surprise is the figure for Greek, 2000 pupils; this seems to flatly contradict the standard picture that few Scottish pupils had access to Greek. Either the professors are wrong or the table is in error. The other surprise is how strong Latin and Greek appear to be in the more remote rural areas: for example in Annan²⁸⁰ and the Isle of Lewis. The most popular text used in Greek classes appears to be Moor's *Grammar*.²⁸¹ .

²⁷⁹ Although headed parochial education the returns include 'all other schools within the bounds'. *Evidence* Vol.1 Appendix p 233.

²⁸⁰ Thomas Carlyle attended the parish school and Annan Academy before leaving for Edinburgh University aged fifteen in 1810

²⁸¹ This would be the edition first published in 1766 and subsequently re-issued and enlarged under editorship of firstly Dalzel and then Dunbar.

4 (b) The 1826 Classical Curriculum: Class Sizes and Lecturing Hours

<i>University</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Class/Numbers</i>	<i>Hours per week</i>
St Andrews	Latin	Junior (63) Senior (119)	10 5
	Greek	Junior (61) Senior (104)	12.5 5
Glasgow	Latin	Junior (336) Senior (200)	10 5
	Greek	Junior (200) Senior (200) Private (Not given)	5 5 5
King's College	Latin	Junior (80) Senior (Not given)	2 3
	Greek	Junior (81) Senior (130)	10 2
Marischal College	Latin	Junior (57) Senior (53)	3 3
	Greek	Junior (64) Senior 1 (47) Senior 2 (14)	15 3 1
Edinburgh	Latin	Junior (153) Senior (252)	6. 7.5 ²⁸²
	Greek	Junior (144) Private 1 Private 2	10 5 3/4

²⁸² This included Pillans thirty minutes of weekly elocution lessons.

4 (c) The 1826 Classical Curriculum: Reading Lists, Humanity

<i>University</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Texts</i>
St Andrews	Junior	<i>Cataline Conspiracy</i> extract, Terence 2 plays, 1/2 Books <i>Aeneid</i> , Livy extract, Mair's <i>Grammar</i>
	Senior	2 books Livy, Horace <i>Odes/Ars Poetica</i> selection, Plautus, Catullus
	Private	All Livy plus Tacitus
Glasgow	Junior	Tacitus, Juvenal, Persius
	Senior	Not given
King's College	Junior	Horace: <i>Epistles</i> and <i>Odes</i>
	Second	Extracts from Cicero, Seutonius, Tacitus, Juvenal, Lucretius and Lucan
Marischal College	Junior	Horace Selection
	Senior	Horace, <i>Aeneid</i> Bk. VI
Edinburgh	Junior	Mair's <i>Grammar</i> , Curtius, <i>Aeneid</i> one book, Livy Bk. 21, Extracts Ovid and Horace
	Senior	Horace, Cicero, Livy, Juvenal, Quintillian or Tacitus
	Private	Not given

4 (d) The 1826 Classical Curriculum: Reading Lists, Greek

<i>University</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Texts</i>
St Andrews	Junior	Dalzel's <i>Minora</i> , Xenophon extracts, <i>Iliad</i> one book
	Senior	Dalzel's <i>Majora</i> , <i>Iliad</i> one book, Plato one book, Longinus extracts, Aristotle <i>Rhetoric</i> or <i>Poetics</i>
Glasgow	Junior	Moor's <i>Grammar</i> , Sandford's <i>Selections</i> and <i>Exercises</i>
	Second	As above plus Homer, Tragedies and Gospels
	Senior	Homer, Greek tragedies
King's College	Junior	Dalzel's <i>Minora</i> , Homer one book
	Second	Dalzel's <i>Majora</i>
Marischal College	Junior	New Testament, Sandford's <i>Extracts</i> plus Homer one book
	Second	Dalzel <i>Majora</i>
	Third	Longinus plus Sophocles one play
Edinburgh	Junior	Moor's <i>Grammar</i> , Dalzel's <i>Minora</i> , Dunbar's <i>Greek Extracts</i>
	Second	Xenophon <i>Anabasis</i> , Herodotus, Plato, <i>Iliad</i> one book, Dunbar's <i>Exercises</i>
	Third	<i>Medea</i> , <i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i> , <i>Philoctetes</i> , <i>Prometheus</i> , <i>Nubes</i> , <i>Plutus</i> , Demosthenes <i>On the Crown</i> and Thucydides one book

The decision to publish the classical curricula was perhaps designed to cause maximum embarrassment to certain institutions; for presented here was the work of two leading

Scottish schools with younger pupils, larger classes²⁸³ and a much more rigorous syllabus, in both Humanity and Greek, than some universities,. This disparity surely could not continue and especially not within the boundaries of one city and the Scottish capital at that.

One very conspicuous omission from the four volumes of evidence is any discussion whatsoever of the tutorial teaching. Indeed one researcher, J. R. Peddie, has stated that this issue was never raised in any of the three major, nineteenth century parliamentary investigations into Scottish universities.²⁸⁴ That this was the case in Scotland even after reform stands in marked contrast to the changes introduced at Oxford in the same period. Prior to the Oxford University Act of 1854 tutorials had largely been the preserve of private tutors but after the Act:

The private tutor or coach... was no longer needed to do the work of the college tutor in training the ablest student to distinguish themselves in Schools; the college tutors themselves were now busily engaged in doing that; the private coach ministered instead to those who were struggling for a pass.²⁸⁵

The reason behind this absence, in Scotland, is that the introduction of any type of tutorial system would inevitably create a demand far more academic staff than the Scottish norm, a professor plus in some cases an assistant. Put another way, such a change could only be funded by dramatically increasing course fees and this would result in far smaller classes, but also considerably reduce the professor's salary which was overwhelmingly dependent on this income.

²⁸³ Note the comment under the fee list for Edinburgh Academy 'The number of boys in each class is limited to 110' *Evidence* Vol. 1 p 239

²⁸⁴ J. R. Peddie, *Scottish Universities. A Record of their Development during the period 1826-1926*. D. Litt. (University of Glasgow, 1927) Appendix B p.1. The topic first saw the light of day, according to Peddie, in 1910 in the report of the Lord Elgin's Treasury Committee on [Scottish] University Grants.

²⁸⁵ Sparrow (1967) p. 115

Provisional Resolutions of the Royal Commission of Visitation

If the Scottish universities were under any illusion as to just how radical the Commissioners of 1826 intended to be, they were thoroughly disabused by the *Provisional Resolutions* issued to all universities for comment in November 1828. The document was terse, comprehensive and radical. In essence this document was in two main sections: a scheme of reform that would apply to all the universities and then a second section addressing particular local issues. The template that was to be applied to all institutions begins with this important preamble and opening salvo on the status quo:

That it is the opinion of the Commission, that it would in a high degree raise the standard of Classical Literature in Scotland, that the Elementary Greek Classes in the different Universities be discontinued, and that no person be received into the first Greek class who has not been accurately instructed in Grammar, and had not attained such proficiency in the language as to read with facility the Historical parts of the New Testament and the first three books of the *Anabasis*...That for ascertaining and securing such preparatory knowledge, there shall be, at the commencement of every Session a strict Examination, by not fewer than three persons properly qualified, not being Professors appointed for this purpose by the Senatus Academicus'.²⁸⁶

More specifically there should be a national curriculum with the following features

- 1 Four year programme with Latin and Greek part of the first year programme two hours per subject each day. Subjects to continue in the second year again two hours per subject but no progression permitted allowed until the first year student has passed the second year entrance examination. Greek to continue into third year, one hour per week
- 2 All students receive a certificate on leaving a class at the end of session
- 3 For degree of BA students to be examined in

²⁸⁶ *Evidence* Vol.1 p 243.

‘two decades of Livy or the Orations of Cicero and the whole of Virgil or Horace or Juvenal...In Greek to be tested in Thucydides or Demosthenes or Aristotle’s Ethics or Rhetoric-and in two tragedies of Sophocles’.²⁸⁷

The examination was to be either a viva voce or written one or both.

4 That professors within a specified time after appointment publish a syllabus or an outline of his programme of lectures

5 Number of examiners for the Arts degree specified as six. No more than six candidates to be examined in any one day.

6 The times when lectures take place to be specified

7 Fees fixed at three guineas

The universities were then invited to respond to the provisional resolutions.

All the universities were aghast. The University of Edinburgh took six months to respond; the Faculty of Arts felt that the abandonment of Greek would be

highly injurious to the general education of the country...Till reform, therefore, begin in the right quarter, and be left to operate slowly and silently, the Faculty foresee nothing but mischief from the adoption of the measure proposed.²⁸⁸

But not even this thinly veiled rejection satisfied Dunbar for he submitted a personal letter to the Commissioners reiterating the need for Elementary Greek and warned of personal harm that reform would bring to his door:

if the resolution should be attempted to be carried into effect, his [Dunbar’s] income, derived almost wholly from the students attending his classes, would be seriously diminished and that he would, in consequence, look to them for an indemnification he would sustain. His commission entitles him to all the rights and

²⁸⁷ *Evidence* Vol.1 p.245.

²⁸⁸ *Evidence* Vol.1 p. 273.

privileges which his predecessors enjoyed, and these he would sincerely trusts, will never be infringed by any arbitrary measures.²⁸⁹

The Edinburgh Senatus regretted that the Royal Commission had not fulfilled its terms of reference in reviewing the constitution of the university;

the Senatus Academicus must express their disappointment and regret that nothing has been intimated to them of any design on the part of the Commissioners to direct their attention to the great and pressing inquiry concerning the constitution of the university.²⁹⁰

This observation received a very dusty answer from the Royal Commission; the university's comments are 'erroneous and unfounded....irregular and uncalled for'.²⁹¹ After receiving these responses to their initial proposals the Commissioners proceeded to prepare their final report.

General Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Visit the Universities and Colleges of Scotland

Published in October 1831 the final, concise *Report* is divided in two sections with the first dealing with the general conclusions and proposals whilst the second profiles each university. This latter section is little more than a polished abridgement of the evidence taken earlier. In the first section we can see what has happened to their initial radical agenda. The commissioners insist that in the light of comments on their initial proposals from the universities their resolutions have been 'materially altered'²⁹². Early on in the *Report* the authors observe rather dryly:

the objections of the Professors distinctly rest on the supposed tendency of the Recommendations to affect the income of existing Professors, so far as they derive such income from the fees payable by Students, and varying of course with number

²⁸⁹ *Evidence* Vol.1 p 279.

²⁹⁰ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p. 252.

²⁹¹ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p 45.

²⁹² *Report* p 7.

of Students. We are persuaded that the apprehensions so strongly expressed on this subject are groundless.²⁹³

Their main proposals concern curriculum change. In terms of management Edinburgh was to have a University Court freeing it, at last, from the Corporation's control and this model be adopted elsewhere. Glasgow was to have a system of 'proper inspection and control'²⁹⁴ in financial matters and that at Aberdeen, King's and Marischal should amalgamate.²⁹⁵ The Commissioners wished also to ban henceforward the appointment of joint-professors or assistants and Successors..

This was the first published record of the Commissioners' views. Their radical recommendations were based on a wealth of evidence which was referred to but remained unknown to the general public until the publication in 1837 of the four volumes of oral and documentary evidence. This was the year after the second major attempt at legislation had failed. The puzzle is why such a wealth of evidence was not published, prior to the proposed legislation, and thereby acting as justification for the need for university 'reform'. One factor may also have been the number of Commissioners who dissented in part from some of the recommendations of the Report; nine Commissioners, including the chairman Rosebery, dissented and one, the Rev. John Lee, dissociated himself completely from the Report. A more practical answer to this puzzle is supplied by a letter written to one of the Commissioners, Reverend John Lee, by Henry Warburton, who appears to have been part of the Prime Minister's, Lord Melbourne, secretariat:

This copy had a narrow escape from the destruction at the fire which consumed the House of Commons and for some days I thought it was lost, but with some books, it was removed in a large chest to a place of safety at the first alarm.²⁹⁶

²⁹³ *Report* p. 7.

²⁹⁴ *Report* p. 20.

²⁹⁵ The Commissioners are less than impressed with the financial probity of the Aberdeen colleges describing their financial activities as 'altogether illegal' *Report* p.24.

²⁹⁶ Letter dated July 13th 1835. Lee Papers MS 3441. On October 16th 1834 the Houses of Parliament were almost totally destroyed by fire.

John Lee: Behind the Scenes of the 1826 Royal Commission

Some explanation as to why the two attempts at legislation, in 1835 and 1836, failed to convert the radical proposals contained in the 1830 Report into a statute is provided by a set of private papers lodged at the National Library of Scotland: the Lee Papers.²⁹⁷

Although now a largely forgotten figure, in the first half of the nineteenth century Lee played a central role in the academic, ecclesiastical and political affairs of Scotland. Indeed his career exemplifies the fact that it was virtually impossible, in this period, to separate the affairs of the Kirk from the governance of Scotland's universities. His papers seemed to have received, as yet, very little serious academic consideration.

Lee was born in Stow, Midlothian, in 1779, and at 15 went to Edinburgh University where he joined a distinguished group of Scottish undergraduates who were to transform Scottish and British political life: amongst his contemporaries were Henry Brougham,²⁹⁸ the future Lord Chancellor; Henry Cockburn; James Pillans; George Dunbar; and the future Lord Advocate, John Murray.

After graduating, in 1804, Lee became a close friend of one the most eminent liberal clergymen in the Church of Scotland, Dr Alexander ['Jupiter',²⁹⁹] Carlyle, long-time minister³⁰⁰ of the fashionable parish of Inveresk just outside Edinburgh. Living with and acting as major domo to Carlyle,³⁰¹ then aged 82, Lee came into contact with some of the last surviving architects of the Scottish Enlightenment, especially Adam Ferguson³⁰² and

²⁹⁷ John Lee's correspondence, held in 90 box files, starts, in 1797, when he was 18 and continues until his death in 1859.

²⁹⁸ Henry Brougham, (1778-1868) was created Baron Brougham of Vaux when appointed Lord Chancellor in 1830. He was in the vanguard of almost every Whig reform in the first part of the nineteenth century from emancipation of the slaves, the Scottish Reform Bill, to the root and branch reform of the English judiciary. He was an ardent supporter of the foundation of the University of London (foundation stone laid in 1827), 'the Scotch influence was paramount in the shaping of the new university', R Stewart *Henry Brougham 1778-1868: His Public Career* (1985) p. 197.

²⁹⁹ The sobriquet derived from the fact that many believed Carlyle's distinguished profile had been used by the Scottish neo-classical painter, Gavin Hamilton (1723-1798), for a portrait of the Roman deity

³⁰⁰ He was minister there for 57 years, 1748-1805.

³⁰¹ 'I [Carlyle] have got....a trusty friend and an able physician, an uncommonly good divine and an eminent preacher-all in the person of one young man (Lee) who I have taken to live with me' *Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk 1722-1805* ed. John Hill (1910) p.602.

³⁰² Ferguson ((1723-1816) held a variety of posts in Edinburgh: in 1757 he succeeded his friend David Hume as Librarian to the Advocates Library and also acted as tutor to the sons of Lord Bute. In 1759 he was

Dugald Stewart³⁰³. This friendship clearly opened many doors, ecclesiastical, aristocratic and intellectual to this 25-year-old man. Carlyle died in 1805, but before his death he had appointed Lee to be his literary trustee and to superintend the publication of his memoir.

In 1812 his career took a different direction when he was appointed Professor of Church History at St Mary's College, St Andrews. This was a post he was to hold for nine years. In 1820-1821 he achieved the unique distinction of being a professor at St Andrews but also holding the chair of Moral Philosophy at King's College, Aberdeen.

In 1821 he resumed his ecclesiastical career taking charge of first the Canongate Church in Edinburgh and then Lady Yesters Church and finally the Old Church Parish [St Giles Cathedral], all very influential positions within the hierarchy of the Kirk. His powerful position in the Kirk was further cemented by his appointment, in 1827, to the permanent post of Principal Clerk of the General Assembly. In 1837 he returned to academic life with an unhappy three years as Principal of the United College of St Andrews. In 1840 he was appointed Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh. Two years later he was appointed Principal of the university and, in 1845, he assumed, too, the post of Professor of Divinity. After the Great Disruption in 1843 Lee stayed loyal to the established church and in the following year was elected Moderator of 'the old kirk.'³⁰⁴ Lee's first biographer Lord Neaves says he

had not an enemy or an ill-wisher in the world. The numerous appointments which he successively and simultaneously held are a proof of the esteem and respect with

appointed to the chair of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh University and from 1764-1785 held the chair of Moral Philosophy.

³⁰³ Born in 1753 Stewart became Professor of Mathematics in 1775 taking over from his father at Edinburgh University. In 1785 he was appointed to the chair of Moral Philosophy succeeding Adam Ferguson and he held this post until 1810. He was 'the most honoured name in (Scottish) philosophy' G. Davie *The Democratic Intellect* p. 258. Lord Palmerston studied under and lodged with Stewart

³⁰⁴ A popular rhyme of 1843 talks of

The Free Kirk, the Wee Kirk
The Kirk without the steeple.
The Auld Kirk, the cauld kirk
The kirk without the people

which he was regarded by all...Orthodox in doctrine, evangelical in sentiment and blameless in conduct³⁰⁵.

This is a view not altogether endorsed by the evidence derived from Lee's private papers. His letters, prior to the setting of the Royal Commission in 1826, do shed some light on the machinations over academic appointments and the scramble for patronage that took place in Scotland in the early years of the century. The first sign that he might become part of the Royal Commission is contained in a letter, dated September 10th 1826,³⁰⁶ from the Rev. Robert Haldane, Principal of St Mary's College, St Andrews:

I extremely disappointed that I did not get over when I intended....and after the Commission began its labours I thought it unnecessary to go to Edinburgh till I should have something of their proceedings. They have sent us seventy-five questions and the answers will occupy folio volumes. I wish you could make your visit here a little earlier, as you might be of material service to both colleges³⁰⁷ in enabling them to answer some of the questions...If any addition is to be made to the Commission, we must endeavour to get you named on public grounds.³⁰⁸

Events began to move quickly; six days later Lord Melville writes to Lee:

there is reason to apprehend that several of the persons named in the Commission will be able to afford much assistance in that inquiry. I have suggested to Mr Peel the expediency of adding several other names...and have taken the liberty of including yours in the number of proposed additional names...I hope you will agree to lend us your aid.³⁰⁹

What is interesting here is the fact that it is Lord Melville who seems to be pulling the strings and not the, nominal, chairman of the Commission, Lord Aberdeen, who had been elected on August 31st 1826. Lee replied immediately:

³⁰⁵ J. Lee, *Inaugural Addresses in the University of Edinburgh; to which is prefixed a memoir of the author by Lord Neaves*. (Edinburgh, 1861) pp. xvii-xviii

³⁰⁶ The Commission had been established July 23rd 1826.

³⁰⁷ That is United College and St Mary's.

³⁰⁸ *Lee Papers* MS 3436/73 September 10th 1826.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, MS 3436/75. September 16th 1826

Lord Melville presents his compliments to Dr Lee and in consequence of his letter of yesterday's date will take an early opportunity of acquainting Mr Peel that Dr Lee is willing to undertake the duty of one of the Commission³¹⁰

In many ways Lee's appointment did make sense: he had studied at Edinburgh for ten years, taught at St Andrews and held an appointment, albeit briefly at, King's College. He also moved in the higher reaches of Kirk society in the capital. Lee clearly acted as a conduit between the universities and the Commission, receiving and passing on news of their anxieties, thus Haldane at St Mary's College wrote saying he had,

at last succeeded in getting possession of our Charters out of Walter Cooks' hands but it was only by the strong measure of sending his nephew to Edinburgh with a peremptory order not to leave the home until they were delivered to him. It was lucky I did so for amongst them were all the papers which we have been required to copy...I shall go to Edinburgh and have some conversation with you, this I think will be before the Commission meets again³¹¹.

In a similar vein Haldane writes again twelve days later:

Many thanks for the papers which you sent. They shall be carefully returned. Our answers were all sent over on Tuesday and are lodged with the Commission - Is the Commission opened as yet for the new members? Kept the secret with regard to you till the last two or three days. The appointment has given great satisfaction here³¹²

But it was not just St Andrews that contacted the new Commissioner; in October Dr MacFarlane, Principal of Glasgow University, wrote to Lee complaining that

³¹⁰ Lee Papers 3436,/77 September 17th 1826.

³¹¹ Lee Papers 3436/79 September 18th 1826.

³¹² Lee Papers 3436,/83. September 30th 1826

most of our Charters, etc older than the Reformation were carried off by the last Popish archbishops [and therefore they could only submit] attested copies.³¹³

In November he contacted his old friend at Aberdeen, Patrick Forbes who was Professor of Humanity, to alert him that:

I see no prospect of any visit being paid to you while the College continues to sit this session. Though there is a great wish to break ground in all the universities while teaching is going forward. Glasgow³¹⁴ will probably be the first to endure this infliction-and I do not know that the experiment will be tried everywhere.

The main focus for the Commissions work was of course the University of Edinburgh and although he then occupied no official position at the university, Lee, Commissioner and divine, was called to give evidence on November 8th 1827. Some of the first version of Lee's evidence survives³¹⁵ together with his corrections. It appears that Lee not only corrected the grammar but also expanded statements of fact. Thus in the original draft the sentence, 'A very great proportion of the Students did write those exercises, and I believe, in general with very great care', becomes, in Lee's revised version,

A very great proportion of the Students performed those Exercises and, I believe in general with very considerable care. I have reason to be partial to the system pursued in this Class, as it was the means of introducing me to the favourable notice of Dr Finlayson, to whose good opinion I was indebted for several steps of preferment; and indeed I may trace all my success in life to the friendship of those Professors whose inspection of their Students was the most minute, and who required the most rigorous account of the attention paid to their instructions.³¹⁶

³¹³ *Lee Papers* 3436/91.October 16th 1826

³¹⁴ It was. January 4th and October 11th 1827.

³¹⁵ *Lee Papers* 3436/235-238 four pages of what in the report was to be eighteen pages of testimony.

³¹⁶ *Evidence* Vol. 1 p.595.

The contrast between the mood of institutions before and after the Report of the Royal Commission is best illustrated by two letters from Lee's friend Patrick Forbes. On September 19th 1828 Forbes writes:

I am much obliged by your offer of a perusal of the report, which I shall be glad to see - for although I feel very little anxiety about what concerned my own department, yet I am a little anxious as to what may have a bad effect on the general interests of learning in this part of the country, and which I am convinced may be seriously injured by trifling innovations, or even improvements. And I can have no confidence in a certain person's intentions whilst his ignorance of the business of teaching arising from his want of experience, and his self conceit will certainly beget the most hurtful prejudices in his mind. As to my silence on the subject you may be quite at ease-but that the report will be seen here before it is published I have little doubt. The reason of my saying so I cannot commit to paper.³¹⁷

But then a month later comes the bombshell, the draft report:

I have perused the Report, and must acknowledge that I feel it quite impossible to convey to you any idea of my sentiments with regard to it. The author's view of the mode of carrying on education and of improving the system of our College are so completely different from mine and in my opinion so crude and grossly wrong that I must write a pamphlet before I could show wherein his mistakes consist....The nonsense he has spoken about the Humanity Classes I shall not enter upon....his misrepresentation of the disadvantages of the present plan are gross.³¹⁸

Lee by 1827 was not just a Commissioner, witness, interested party but also effectively the sole secretary to the Commission.³¹⁹ However, he had made enemies in

³¹⁷ *Lee Papers* 3437/117. September 19th 1828. Difficult to be sure what these dark hints mean - was Forbes referring to his *bête noir*, the Principal, Rev. Jack?

³¹⁸ *Lee Papers* 3437/123 October 3rd 1828.

³¹⁹ A unique situation in nineteenth century official government inquiries.

Scottish public life, most notably the Rev. Thomas Chalmers,³²⁰ leader of the reforming evangelical wing of the established church. Lee and Chalmers, both colleagues, at St Andrews, clashed repeatedly throughout their ecclesiastical lives. Their very public disputes created a war of pamphlets: a distinguishing feature of public life in nineteenth century Edinburgh.³²¹

Just how damaging to Scotland's universities this failure to reform or be reformed and Lee's equivocations were revealed by a letter to Lee, on December 22nd 1838, describing the state of the professorial staff at Glasgow:

The college has never been in such a state as it is at present since I knew anything about it, the Professor of Civil Law is in a state of imbecility and lectures by depute...Mr Myles professor of Moral Philosophy has had a paralytic shock, has lost his understanding and lectures by depute. Dr Jeffrey Professor of Anatomy is enfeebled by age and cannot be heard in the front seat and is also lecturing by depute. The Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine has always discharged one-half of his duties by depute - this state of the two most important Medical classes is beginning to tell most fearfully on the medical school.³²²

The 1836 Bill

The 1836 bill to reform Scotland's universities bore very little resemblance to the recommendations made in 1831: the interest in the curriculum was replaced by a concern for management. The Bill had nineteen clauses or 'heads'. The most important change was suggested in the preamble:

his Majesty...shall...appoint a Board of Visitors to the several universities...and such Boards...consist of not fewer than five or more than seven Members and shall subsist for a period of five years.

³²⁰ Lee regarded Dr Chalmers as 'my personal enemy' *Lee Papers* 3442/26 October 18th 1837.

³²¹ *Dr Lee's Refutation of the Charges brought against him by the Rev. Dr Chalmers and others in reference to the questions on church extension and university education* 1837 (Edinburgh).

³²² *Lee Papers* 3442, 202.

It then began to describe the composition and powers of these Royal Visitors:

the several Principals of the Universities of St Andrew's [sic], Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, for the time being shall be constituent members of the Board of Visitors.

What was breathtaking were the powers that were to be granted to these Royal Visitors:

the several Boards of Visitor...shall constitute a Court of Review in the University in which such Boards are so appointed...which Court shall have full power and authority to entertain and determine all questions...in relation to the regulation and discipline of the University, the management and distribution of the Property and Funds...and generally all questions touching the affairs and interests of such Universities, of whatever kind or description.

This Board was to act as the final court of appeal for any grievance:

it shall be lawful and competent, for any Principal, Patron, or Professor in any of the said Universities, for any person having any right or interest in the affairs thereof, for any Graduate, student, Office-Bearer, or other person connected therewith to appeal to such Court of Review against any decision, deliverance or regulation made or pronounced by the Senatus Academicus or Rectorial Court, or by any other body, or person possessing or claiming to possess any jurisdiction, control or authority in regard to the regulation, discipline, property, and administration of, in, or concerning such University.

The Board's were empowered:

to make such regulations, in relation to government, discipline and system of education...and to the management of and distribution of property and funds...as they shall think most conducive to the improvement in education in such Universities.

Furthermore each university was to, within six months of the passage of the Act to

submit such regulations, founded upon the reports...[the] Commission of Visitation...[that] shall seem calculated to promote the posterity and success of such University as a place of education and the advancement of science and learning.

Their powers also included, very significantly, being able to change the academic hierarchy:

it shall be lawful for such Boards of Visitors to make such regulation and it shall be lawful for such Boards regarding the abolition of Professorships within the Universities to which they shall be appointed.

These draconian powers admitted no right of appeal and they also had power over appointments:

every candidate for a Professorship shall transmit his recommendations and certificates to the Board of Visitors...and it shall be lawful for such Boards respectively, after consideration of such recommendations and certificates, and such personal communication with the candidate as they think necessary, to report their opinion as to the candidate who ought to be preferred to his Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department if the patronage or nomination be vested in the Crown, or to the Senatus Academicus, or any other body or person...if the patronage or nomination be vested in the Professors, or in any such body or person.

The final major change proposed was that an inquiry take place to investigate the possible merger of King's College and Marischal and whether this would benefit 'the advancement of science and learning'.

There was widespread and well-organised anger in Scotland both to the contents of the bill and the timing of its publication. The bill was laid before Parliament on June 13th 1836: after the Parliamentary Recess but more importantly after the annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 'Scotland's Parliament.' Lord Melbourne the Prime Minister intended to allow only a week for the First and Second Reading of the bill.

Parliament was due to rise for the Summer Recess in late August and all of these factors suggested to many Scots that any debate, within Scotland, about the Bill was being deliberately denied.

The Bill Defeated

The man who had been given the task of drawing up the 1836 bill and dealing with Scottish sensitivities was the John Murray, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, the principal Law Officer in Scotland.³²³ The Murray and the Ramsay³²⁴ papers, lodged at the National Library of Scotland, give some clues as to the pressure he was put under as not only as Scotland's principal law officer³²⁵ but also as a patriot and a Presbyterian.

Although the relevant proposed legislation was not published until June 1836, many in Scotland had a shrewd idea what the Melbourne administration's intentions were; the MP for Aberdeen, Alexander Bannerman, had in 1835 brought forward a bill for Scottish university reform which had fallen. Murray first step was to circulate the government's proposed legislation to all five universities. The first important letter, to Murray, relevant to the proposed legislation is from Edinburgh's College Baillie,³²⁶ Donaldson. His key complaint is about the powers of visitation of Royal Visitors:

I am instructed to convey to your Lordship their [the Corporation's] most decided disaffection of any Bill which legislates for the whole of Scottish universities at once...the necessity for change may be obvious and beyond dispute in some of them, and altogether uncalled for and inadmissible in others.³²⁷

The constitution of the University of Edinburgh differed from other Scottish universities as being

³²³ The corresponding post in England is the Attorney-General.

³²⁴ The two families were related by marriage.

³²⁵ It should be noted that Scotland, unlike Ireland, had no Secretary of State; this increased the importance of Murray's position. Scotland and Ireland had roughly equivalent populations but Scotland had far fewer MPs even after the Scottish Reform Bill of 1832. After the Act of Union 1800 Ireland sent a 100 MPs to Westminster, after the Scottish Reform Act (1832) Scotland sent 64 MPs to London.

³²⁶ That is the member of Edinburgh Corporation in charge of university affairs.

³²⁷ *Ramsay Letters* MS 2904/16, hereafter *Ramsay*, undated but probably April 1836.

completely free from the election of professors [and the] College Committee would think of objecting to any improvements in the mode of regulating the discipline and studies of the University, they conceive no Board should have the power to alter *their* institutions as may be very proper to other seminaries whose means are more ample, their election less under salutary controul [sic] and where efficiency has not been so long and fairly tried as that of the University of Edinburgh.

In the margin Donaldson adds:

the universal aim of modern legislation is to withdraw power from the few and to give the intelligent portion of the people a due controul (sic) in public affairs while the tendency of the proposed measure is directly the reverse.³²⁸

This document then goes on to specify particular objections to the changes proposed: the Royal Visitors would be crown appointees and, 'the Patrons of the University of Edinburgh humbly think that the management of the University cannot be entrusted to better hands than no[w]'. The new Boards would be in power for five years and, 'should concern themselves with discipline and curricula not administration of the funds. These new bodies should not manage the universities property as this is 'objectionable' and 'the large and experimental powers (of these Boards) extremely dangerous'. Finally there is an objection to the public examination of candidates for a chair, the Patrons alone should decide this matter, for 'who could examine Brewster or Herschel or Faraday or Sir Charles Bell?'³²⁹

Edinburgh's objections were soon followed by those from St Andrews who were clearly responding to a missive from Murray giving the heads of a bill. Macfarlane, Principal of Glasgow begged Murray to give him time to officially respond as March was 'the most laborious part of the session'³³⁰ But the public pronouncements sit side by side in this

³²⁸ Ibid

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ramsay MS 2904/32.March 1836

correspondence with more sensitive private letters. In a letter to Murray marked 'Private' Thomas Jackson³³¹ complains about the system of appointing professors

the *Professors* and the *Private Patrons* are allowed the initiative at present the General commission which we recommend should have the power of calling candidates before them and satisfying themselves in such way as they shall see merit, of the propriety or impropriety of the choice - if satisfied of the latter they should have a *veto* without reference to the chancellor individually, but I think it very proper that chancellors should be members of the Board...We academical recluses are not always distinguished for business habits, and I trust your Lordship will excuse my having put you to the trouble of perusing this communication'.³³²

But MacFarlane was not altogether frank with Murray about the situation at Glasgow, as a letter to the Lord Advocate, dated 10th July 1836, from Thomas Thomson³³³ makes very clear:

I have perused the bill for the Scottish Universities with great attention and think that even as amended in committee it will be of great service to Scotland provided it passes. The whole opposition to it in Scotland has been led by one man Principal MacFarlane. He instigated Dr Mcleod and Dr Fleming who brought the petition against it into the Synod of Glasgow and Air. He came down from London to move the Assembly Commission to petition against it. What he had to do with the Presbytery of Edinburgh and the University of St Andrews I do not know; but suspect strongly that he was at the bottom of both. He tried to move the University of Glasgow to petition against it; but could not succeed. However he is moving heaven & earth to get the bill thrown out in the House of Lords & has been twice already & goes again the third time to London tomorrow - doubtless at the

³³¹ Professor of Natural Philosophy at St Andrews.

³³² Ramsay MS 2904/41 undated.

³³³ Professor of Chemistry, Glasgow.

expense of the college & for an object which the Senatus Academicus does not approve of. The reason for this is that he is the greatest delinquent in any of the Scottish Universities. He holds two incompatible situations Minister of the High Church (one of the Official Visitors of the College) & Principal of the University. He is bound by the charter to deliver five lectures a week; but has never delivered one since he held the situation of Principal. ...Were his conduct exposed in the House of Lords it would have good effect on their Lordships.³³⁴

But even the Commissioners themselves were divided: a letter from David Boyle, Justice-Clerk of Scotland and one of the Commissioners expressed his legal fears to Murray, 'it strikes me that some powers proposed by to be conferred on the new Board of Visitors, which rather appears to be as touching on the existing rights of universities'.³³⁵

Only once in this collation do we hear Murray's ambitions for the proposed Bill. On April 4th 1836 he writes to Baird, Principal of Edinburgh, 'I am anxious therefore that the Bill should pass with as little delay as to be consistent with a full consideration of its provisions.'³³⁶ Baird's reply dated three days later expresses his concern. 'I shall be truly sorry if from any quarters impediments are thrown in the way of the Bill passing in a salutary shape.'³³⁷

The view from Aberdeen was communicated to Murray in a letter, dated March 22nd 1836, from the Principal of King's College, the Very Rev. William Jack:

it is my duty to state that the Senatus contemplate with alarm the institution of the Board of Visitors invested with powers so obviously unconstitutional and arbitrary, entitling them to dispense at pleasure with these Laws of the Land which protect the Institutions and Endowments of the Scottish Universities and superseding all their constitutional authority for a determinate period of five years. With perfect

³³⁴ Ramsay MS 2904/76

³³⁵ Ramsay MS 2904/42, March 28th 1836.

³³⁶ Ramsay, MS 2904/47, April 4th 1836

³³⁷ Ramsay, MS 2904/48, April 7th 1836

unanimity if they disapprove of the union of the two colleges as a measure holding out no prospect of advantage whatsoever to the interests of Education or the usefulness of Professors, but evidently calculated to cripple, impoverish and ultimately to effect the suppression of this-the University of the North of Scotland

He urges Murray to 'reconsider the nature of this profound measure which in our opinion would injure the educational interests of Scotland as well as its universities to an incalculable extent.'³³⁸

What further complicated the picture and doomed the reformers cause was the Kirk's resistance to these changes; in June 1836 Murray was informed that,

the Presbytery of Aberdeen took under its consideration...the Universities Bill, The Report of the Committee on the subject was of so violent and vituperative a nature that I moved... but my motion was lost³³⁹

A similar scene was played out in Edinburgh, the Presbytery of Edinburgh voting that the proposed Bill due to 'its tendency dangerous to the interests of religion and learning'³⁴⁰

Some figures within the Kirk and within the academic life were outraged at this opposition, John Lee confided to Murray:

I am clearly of the opinion that these Professors and Clergy in the north ought to be punished, nothing will annoy them half so much as a Commission and I am quite ready not only to move for one but certain to carry it provided the Govt. has no objections.³⁴¹

Yet in the end Lee abdicated from any such role and kept his counsel.

The Public Outcry: the Press, the Kirk and the People

The leading Whig periodical of the day, *The Edinburgh Review*, was very eloquent about the teaching of the classics north and south of the border. The *Review*'s manifesto on the classics was best set out in July 1821, in a review of Dalzel's *Substance of Lectures*, rather

³³⁸ Ramsay, MS 2904/37.

³³⁹ Ramsay, MS 2904/63, June 23rd 1836. Letter from Daniel Dewar of Marischal College.

³⁴⁰ Ramsay, MS 2904/74, July 4th 1836.

³⁴¹ Ramsay, MS 2904/93, July 1836.

in the style Macaulay, the anonymous reviewer, who was in fact Daniel Keyte Sandford recently appointed Professor of Greek at Glasgow, spends two paragraphs on Dalzel and the other fourteen pages discussing the teaching of classics north and south of the Tweed. The author begins by analysing how the Classics took a wrong turn:

The mantle of the scholiast fell upon the monks; they transmitted it with all its virtues to the pedants of future generations. Classical learning was long a species of hereditary slavery; and the sons of bondswoman gloried in their chains. It is under this sort of oppression that men forget the use of their understandings: they were more solicitous to show what they *know* than what they think, they reason from memory and speak in quotations.³⁴²

The author then goes on to give qualified praise to Oxford :

the chief merit of this system appears to be, that though *industry* must be necessarily have been used with talent to ensure success, *stupid industry* will rarely be successful.

But full praise is withheld, for within the Oxford classical tradition:

remains that malignant dullness which formerly took so much pains, first to misrepresent and then revile our spirit towards that Body it continues to disgrace, might learn to blush for its poor perversions and witless insincerity.³⁴³

The problem in Scottish universities in the teaching of Greek is the reliance on prelections

Dalzel must have wished, much as ourselves, to see a little more close and familiar instructions united with the system of Prelection,³⁴⁴ which by itself, does, and can do, little good...a little more trouble should be taken, and a little more activity displayed, than is required at present in the occupants of our Greek chairs. Let them

³⁴² *Edinburgh Review* July 1821 p.303

³⁴³ *Ibid* p 304.

³⁴⁴ The Scottish university system of teaching Latin and Greek involved oral examination of students on the set texts and also the Professor giving prelections. See William Ramsay's *Lectures on Juvenal 1858-1859* Glasgow University Special Collections MS Gen 658-60 and the notebook kept by an Edinburgh student, John Borthwick, of Dalzel's Greek lectures Edinburgh University Special Collections Ac. No. Gen 842

blend something of the character of the English tutor with the dignity of a Scotch Professor, and the business would be done.³⁴⁵

The article then deals with the comforts of a Scottish Greek chair:

When we see the tutors of the English Universities with not a fourth of the emolument, dedicating seven or eight hours a day for more than half the year, to the business of tuition, we must think it rather hard that a Scotch Professor, with an ample income, honourable rank, and six months vacation, cannot do as much to promote the cause of Greek learning in his native country.³⁴⁶

The article concludes with a final assault on the English universities:

half-open institutions...ludicrous enactments of the founders, fitness for election is restricted to some particular school, diocese, county or kindred.³⁴⁷

Significantly a religious periodical, *The British Magazine*,³⁴⁸ was quite prepared to warn its readership of the consequences of these proposed reforms of Scotland's universities:

What will be the consequence? Simply this, that the clergyman and other persons of small property, in remote situations, not having schools within reach at which their sons may be prepared to undergo the examination with success, must forego even the moderate ambition of seeing them in the same situation which they occupy themselves, and be content to see them merged in the lower classes of society³⁴⁹

This call to arms would have had an enormous resonance in Scotland: a door was being closed on the talented Scottish boy whose family had a most modest income.

But all this was as nothing compared to the petitions that rained down on Westminster once the bill was officially published. The first received was from the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh, promptly followed by the Chancellor of St Andrews. The Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh wished

³⁴⁵ *Edinburgh Review*, July 1821 p. 307

³⁴⁶ Ibid 308.

³⁴⁷ Ibid 310.

³⁴⁸ Full title *The British Magazine and Monthly Register of Religious and Ecclesiastical Information, Parochial History and Documents respecting the state of the Poor, Progress of Education &c*

³⁴⁹ Ibid Vol. IX May 1st 1856 pp. 574- 575.

to prevent said Bill which will have the effect of transferring the whole management and in great degree the patronage of the University of Edinburgh from a body chosen by the citizens to a small irresponsible Board of Visitors to be nominated by the Crown and the constitution of which and the members of which it is comprised nothing whatsoever is known from passing into law³⁵⁰

To the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr it represented 'a measure injurious to the rights and dangerous to the usefulness of the University and to the Literature and Religion of Scotland'.³⁵¹ The Magistrates and Inhabitants of the Royal Burgh of Inverary urged the Lords

to stop its further progress till the inhabitants of Scotland have an opportunity of fully expressing their opinion upon a subject of such vast and vital importance.³⁵²

To the graduates of Marischal College the bill was 'dangerous in principle and incapable of being converted into a safe and satisfactory measure of university reform'.³⁵³ The Senatus of King's College warned that the proposed legislation would change and destroy the character of that education which has confessedly raised the country to a very high rank in an intellectual, moral and religious view and until the people of Scotland have had a full time in their remote and disjointed situations to consider such a measure and express their sentiments on the bill effecting so essential to their best and dearest interests.³⁵⁴

Rather foolishly, given Scottish sensitivities on this issue, during all this furore Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister insisted that the government would concede no rights to the Church of Scotland on this issue.³⁵⁵ Only two petitions urged the passage of the bill, one from the Corporation of Aberdeen and the other from the Dean of Faculty and Professors of Marischal.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁰ *Journal of the House of Lords* Vol. LXVIII .

³⁵¹ *Ibid* June 28th

³⁵² *Ibid* 28th June.

³⁵³ *Ibid* June 28th.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid* July 7th.

³⁵⁵ *The Democratic Intellect* p.36 provides one theory for Melbourne's conduct, fear of an over mighty Kirk.

³⁵⁶ This may well be explained by the promise made in 1835 to give a government grant of £15,000 to Marischal to rebuild the college. Marischal lay within the city's boundaries, King's College did not.

The death blow to the bill was delivered on the July 22nd when a petition was received from the Ministers and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland who not only objected to the bill but assured Melbourne that they would take the government through the Scottish courts. Such an act would have threatened the very stability of the Union. The bill was withdrawn.

When the bill was in its death throes an editorial in the *Scotsman* tartly observed that the controversy seemed to be between the Scottish aristocrats and ‘our factious Presbyterians’: the former supporting it, the latter opposing it but knowing more of the subject. The editorial went on to give a warning for the future:

We must hear no more about the inviolability of the old charters of the universities...and we question what would have been the popular reception of the English Municipal Bill, for instance, had it set out with a declaration that all old charters were inviolable.³⁵⁷

To view the defeat of 1836 bill as a victory for the ‘sinister interests’, greedy professors and reactionary universities, is far too simplistic. The effect of implementing the 1831 Report would have been certainly to elevate the importance of the classics and to ‘raise standards’, but the introduction of entrance tests in Latin and more especially Greek would have barred the way to many a ‘lad o’ pairts’ who had perhaps limited access to tuition in Greek. Many Scots believed they had, unlike the situation in England, a well organised national schooling system with over 900 schools and they also had a firm belief in access to university education for all who had the ability. Thus it follows logically that fees must be kept low. Scotland’s universities were very poorly endowed and so they driven to create a system very like that which existed in early nineteenth century Scotland whereby the large classes paid their three guineas directly to the professor. It was a university system that had after all played, unlike Oxford and Cambridge, a leading role in the European Enlightenment.

³⁵⁷ *Scotsman* 1836 August 6th p 2.

Central to this Scottish tradition was the teaching of Humanity (Latin) and in the nineteenth century one of the most prestigious institutions teaching the ancient language was the University of Glasgow.

Chapter Five

‘Six Months Clear’. The Chair of Humanity at the University of Glasgow 1831-1906

The common schools of Scotland, like her Universities, have never been the mere shams that the English universities were during the last century, and the greater part of the English classical schools still are. The only tolerable Latin grammars for school purposes that I know of, which have been produced in these islands until very lately, were written by Scotsmen.

J. S. Mill 1867.³⁵⁸

David Livingstone

The early struggles of the man Florence Nightingale called ‘the greatest man of his generation’³⁵⁹ perhaps best embody the qualities the Scots define and admire as ‘the lad o’ pairts’: the able boy born into very humble circumstances, but, who manages to triumph in the world at large. Nightingale was referring to David Livingstone (1813-1873). He

is usually represented as a self-educated man. This is true in the sense that every educated man is self-educated. The story which himself relates, that at the age of ten, he began work in the cotton factory...and with part of his first week’s wages purchased Ruddiman’s *Rudiments of Latin*, and studied it by placing the book open on the spinning jenny and passing to and fro in front of it as he worked’.³⁶⁰

Livingstone himself recalls:

The dictionary part of my labours was followed up till twelve o’clock or later, if my mother did not interfere by jumping up and snatching the books out of my hands ... I read in this way many of the classical authors, and knew Virgil and Horace better at sixteen than I do now. Our schoolmaster was supported in part by the company;

³⁵⁸ *Inaugural Address delivered to the University of St Andrews Feb 1st 1867 by John Stuart Mill Rector of the University* (1867).

³⁵⁹ T. Jeal Livingstone (1973) p. 1.

³⁶⁰ R.J. Campbell *Livingstone* (1929) pp. 50-51.

he was attentive and kind, and so moderate in his charges that all who wished for education might have obtained it.³⁶¹

This detail from Livingstone's writings was much admired by that Scottish apostle of honest ambition, Samuel Smiles:

The career of Dr. Livingstone is one of the most interesting of all...He would sit up conning his lessons till twelve or later, when not sent to bed by his mother, for he had to be up each morning at by six.³⁶²

As in most autobiographies the author is the hero, but even his most hostile biographers with a scrupulous regard to the known facts, were impressed by his adamant determination to succeed. The facts themselves are stark enough. He was born into a

single kitchen apartment house, which consisted of a single room fourteen feet by ten, with two bed recesses: one for the parents and one for the children. Truckle beds were pulled out at night to cover the whole floorspace. Cooking, eating reading, washing and mending went on in the one room.³⁶³

No privacy was possible 'Water had to be carried up to the apartments, while (human) waste was ejected through "jaw-boxes" in the turret walls.'³⁶⁴ He began his working life as a 'piecer' in the Blantyre Cotton Mills, a mill that had been established by David Dale, Robert Owen's father-in-law, and run on Owenite principles, similar to those employed at nearby New Lanark.³⁶⁵ The owner of the Blantyre Mills in Livingstone's youth was James Montieth who made a personal fortune of £80,000 from the enterprise; as an 'enlightened' employer he provided classes for his employees after their day's work, from 8 pm until 10 pm.

³⁶¹ D. Livingstone *The Autobiography of David Livingstone: From 1813 to 1843* p 6

³⁶² S. Smiles *Self Help* (London: John Murray, 1918) 4th edition .p. 285

³⁶³ Jeal p. 8

³⁶⁴ Ransford O. *David Livingstone and the Dark Interior* (1978) p.78.

³⁶⁵ 'a model industrial community and showpiece of enlightened paternalism' pp. 545-546 *History Today Companion to British History* ed. J. Gardiner & N. Wenborn (1995). The mill complex was acquired by Owen in 1799 and this 'utopian community' (Ibid, p. 546) in 1828.

The end result of all this was that in late September 1836 Livingstone and his father walked the eight miles to Glasgow to enrol him as a student of medicine and in so doing committing David's life savings of £16 to pay the university's fees for a medical education. Then they had to find cheap accommodation³⁶⁶ for the future missionary. Every weekend, during term time, Livingstone would go home and would rise early every Monday morning to attend the first lecture, at 8 am. This was to be the pattern of his student life for the next four years. After Glasgow he was to become a missionary with the London Missionary Society and at the end secure his place in the pantheon of Victorian heroes.

Livingstone's early career illustrates vividly the two hurdles present to any poor Scot who wished to attend the local Scottish university: finding the money to pay both course fees and accommodation but also the need to be proficient in the major rules of Latin syntax and the key features of *accidence* in that language. Unlike the students in the Junior Greek class, both prior knowledge and ability was assumed and without it no student could progress beyond the first year.³⁶⁷ The book list that confronted Livingstone in 1836, as minimum for qualification, was: Livy three books, *Aeneid* three books and two books of Horace's *Odes*.³⁶⁸ This would, in six months of lectures, be beyond a mere beginner.³⁶⁹ The 'lad o' pairts' had in some way or another to master the basics of Latin before the October classes began.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ His first lodgings were with a landlady in Rotten Row two shillings a week, but she proved to be a thief and he soon left for a more expensive room in the High Street.

³⁶⁷ The 1826 Survey of Parochial Education revealed that 8553 pupils were studying Latin in the 906 parishes surveyed.

³⁶⁸ It should be pointed out that for 'Highest Distinction' a Glasgow student would have needed to master the whole of the *Aeneid*, a decade of Livy or nine Orations of Cicero, plus either Plautus or Terence and three *Satires* of Persius.

³⁶⁹ It is difficult to be absolutely certain about this book list due to the lacunae in the University of Glasgow's Calendars. The significant point is this; the Humanity book list remains unchanged for all surviving Calendars up to and including 1864. This is a state of affairs which must have satisfied professors, teachers, crammers, publishers of texts and cribs and perhaps even the students themselves.

³⁷⁰ Livingstone acquired extra tuition in Latin when at Glasgow from a local Catholic priest Father Daniel Gallagher at St Simon's Church, Partick which was about 200 yards from where Livingstone pursued his medical studies at Anderson's College. His academic career initially seemed to have been aimed at becoming a minister for; at the start he studied, for two sessions, Greek with Sandford and Divinity under Wardlaw, but then he switched to Medicine, under Buchanan. Greek was of course an essential requirement for any theological college.

The Glasgow Chair of Humanity

The Scots were proud and confident of their high standards in Latin learning, so much so that unlike the Greek chair at Glasgow, the Chair of Humanity throughout the nineteenth century was always held by a Scot. This pattern was true at all other Scottish universities too. Indeed when this tradition was final broken in 1906 with the appointment of J. S. Phillimore an objection was lodged by one Glasgow professor, Stewart, not as to his scholarship but as to his religion, for Phillimore was a noted Catholic,

I dissent from this decision [the appointment] not from any lack of liking for Professor Phillimore personally and not from any doubt of his ability and distinction as a Latin scholar, but because in my opinion this ultroneous act of the University Court in appointing a Roman Catholic is at variance with the Protestant character stamped upon the University by the Royal Charter of 1577.³⁷¹

No such disquiet had been voiced earlier when Phillimore succeeded Gilbert Murray to the Greek Chair in 1899.

Some impression of what the Latin class was like at Glasgow is provided by the evidence given to the Royal Commission in 1827 by Josiah Walker, Professor of Humanity.³⁷² He compared the situation at Eton College with that at Glasgow: in the former the student staff ratio was 30:1, in the latter, in 1815, 320:1. This was, without assistance an impossible burden. Walker then addressed the issue of student motivation:

Then with respect to our deficiency in motives in classical studies I see scarcely any, except personal taste and predilection, which can urge on students to prosecute these studies farther than what is requisite for getting himself from one class to

³⁷¹ *University of Glasgow Court Camera Meeting Minutes Book* January 1905-April 1907 p. 134 (Archive Reference C1/2/2).

³⁷² Walker was educated at the Royal High School of Edinburgh from whence he went to the city's university. He then spent eight years at Eton as the (private) tutor to the Marquis of Tullibardine, the son of the Duke of Atholl, before being appointed to the Glasgow chair in 1815.

another in the University, till he is entitled to propose himself for entering the Church.³⁷³

The fundamental problem in Scotland he felt was the status of the Classics:

There is, I presume, as much talent in Scotland as in England; and if you were to call it forth by holding out the prospect of professional promotion or pecuniary advantage as a reward to classical eminence, so that a young man might feel he was not misspending his time prolonging his philosophical pursuits; but on the contrary, taking proper and prudential means to secure an independent *status* in society, we might then have some reason to hope for the desirable object of seeing our country rise in its character for scholarship...In England there is a much smaller fraction of the population than in Scotland who attempt classical literature at all, but these few study it longer and with much greater success...they (the English undergraduates) have....scholarships, fellowships and academical offices from 500 to 600...but we have nothing whatsoever in Scotland to correspond³⁷⁴

The ages of Walker's students range from '10 and 11 and some 30 and 40 but the average age is about 14 or 15'. Walker, it seems, was the first Glasgow professor to appoint out of his own pocket an assistant on a salary of £100 'for the six months which his service is required'. As to what he taught the Professor states:

At the lecture I was accustomed to employ half the time in explaining critically some of the authors who are reckoned difficult, such as Tacitus, Juvenal and Persius; and the other half in discussing the different branches of Roman antiquities; the biography and literary character of the Latin authors; the rise, progress and decline of the language and so on.³⁷⁵

He draws a distinction between his students who come from the burgh schools and those less well prepared coming from parochial schools, but 'I say this to express my surprise

³⁷³ *Evidence* Vol. 2 p.93.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 93.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 94.

that the parochial teachers, with all their multiplicity of duties, can prepare their few classical scholars so well.³⁷⁶ The Commissioners asked Walker about how he examined a student's ability, who wished to graduate, in Latin composition and his answer reveals the remarkable survival of Latin essay writing well into the nineteenth century:

I required the students to bring me the last Latin theme which they had written either in the Moral or Natural Philosophy class, and I judge from that essay, of their capacity to write Latin.³⁷⁷

It is impossible to be certain but Walker's observation seems to indicate that the practice of writing academic essays in Latin persisted, at Glasgow at least, remarkably, well into the nineteenth century.

Professors William and George Ramsay

David Livingstone was taught Latin at Glasgow not by Walker but by William Ramsay (1806-1865) who came to Glasgow University in 1829 as assistant to the Professor of Mathematics, but after a year became an assistant to the Professor of Humanity, Walker. On Walker's death in 1831 he was appointed, it seems, without any rivals to the Chair of Humanity.³⁷⁸ This procedure involved a 'trial' where he was asked to produce a translation of a portion of Persius, to translate Livy Chapter 51 and 52 and to produce an essay in Latin on the topic *De vita et scriptis Plauti commentatio*. [*Concerning the Life and Commentaries on the Writings of Plautus*]. Having satisfied the Professors on these scores, he then swore the traditional professorial oath:

Ego Gulielmus Ramsay electus Professor Linguarum humaniarum in Collegio Glasquenii, promitto sancteque juro, me fervente Dei gratia. muneris mihi demandati partes studiose fideliterque obituro et in huius Collegii rebus ac rationibus gerendis ac promovendis et commodis ac ornamenti augendis nihil

³⁷⁶ Ibid p. 95.

³⁷⁷ Ibid p.97. The Commissioners had, the day before, observed at first hand Walker examining his Humanity students. Glasgow's most famous public examination, the Blackstone, was conducted in Latin up to 1858.

³⁷⁸ *The Minutes of the Faculty 1825-1839* p. 195 (University of Glasgow Archives C1/1/4) make no mention of other applicants.

reliqui ac summam fidem et diligentiam facturum.³⁷⁹ [I, William Ramsay elected Professor of Humanity in Glasgow College, promise and solemnly swear fervently by the grace of God that the duties demanded from me will meet faithfully and diligently and in the affairs of this College and moreover promote, increase and make flourish by the cause of learning omitting naught and do this in the greatest faith and diligence]

Ramsay then signed the Confession of Faith and agreed to maintain the tenets of the established Church of Scotland as enshrined in the Westminster Confession of 1647.

The Calendar for 1844 spells out the way the Humanity class is taught

The language, literature, history and antiquities of ancient Rome...on account of the increased number of students, and the consequent impossibility of examining them so frequently as the youth of them rendered necessary, the class was some years ago separated into two divisions which met at different hours, the first more advanced division meets at half past 8 and 1; and the second at half past 7 and 11. The Lectures and Prelections delivered at 1 may be attended by students who are not enrolled in the Public Class.³⁸⁰

Ramsay brought certain personal qualities to his tenure at Glasgow for he was 'a Scotsman, educated in a Scottish school and in a Scottish University and with an intimate knowledge of the Scottish educational system in all its developments'.³⁸¹ He became famous in the view of his nephew George for his man-of-the-world 'prelections on Plautus, Juvenal and Catullus'.³⁸² Remarkably a record of his lectures on Juvenal, taken down by a student, David Murray, has survived.³⁸³ They reveal a scholar who was anxious for his students to achieve scrupulous philological accuracy, but who also wished to show the wider social and political context. He emerges as a scholar who showed his students how

³⁷⁹ Ibid p. 195.

³⁸⁰ p. 16.

³⁸¹ Murray D. *Memories of the Old College* (Glasgow, 1927) p 210.

³⁸² Ramsay G. *Proceedings on the Occasion of the Presentation to the University of Glasgow of a Portrait* (Glasgow, 1907) p. 12. Hereafter *Proceedings* (1907)

³⁸³ *Lectures on Juvenal* 1858-1859.

Every aid which could be obtained from grammar and philology, from history and topography, from manners and customs, from constitutional rule or administrative procedure (could be) brought to bear.³⁸⁴

Ramsay was not content to simply produce standard textbooks on his discipline but to address what he saw as some of the deficiencies of Scottish classical education. In 1837 his *An Elementary Treatise on Latin Prosody* was published and as he explained in the Preface:

It has been my object in drawing up the following Treatise, to furnish my students and others with a useful manual in a department of classical literature to which sufficient attention is not paid in many of the country schools in Scotland.³⁸⁵

But he is not afraid to court controversy, for he omits Plautus and Terence as

we are still ignorant of the laws by which their verse is regulated, if indeed they did think it necessary to confine themselves within the limits of any well defined rules... We have put no faith in those compositions which are known as the Tragedies of Seneca....no one can tell who the Seneca was whose name they bear, or when he lived.³⁸⁶

The text is divided into two sections, the first dealing with 'Rules for the Quantity of Syllables' and the second 'Versification'. In 1859 he produced a privately printed edition of *Elegiac Extracts from Tibullus and Ovid*: this was initially intended for his Glasgow students only. A second edition, edited by his nephew George, appeared in 1868 in which the Tibullus was omitted and the reader was presented with 74 pages of text and 250 pages of commentary.

One work above all others made Ramsay well known beyond the Tweed, *A Manual of Roman Antiquities*. This work was first published in 1851 and was an immediate success,

³⁸⁴ Murray *Memories* p.211.

³⁸⁵ *Preface* p. v.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

by 1894 it had gone through fifteen editions.³⁸⁷ This work grew out of Ramsay's work on the *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1842) edited by William Smith and published by John Murray.³⁸⁸ The success of Ramsay's *Manual* was possibly the result of several factors: his focus was more modest than Smith's, as he concentrated on only a limited period of Rome's history, from the foundation of the city to 100 AD, as opposed to, in Smith's case, all of Greek and Roman history; Ramsay's book priced at ten shillings and sixpence was half the price of Smith's *Dictionary* and also the *Manual* was much more manageable in size: 570 pages set against Smith's 1,292 pages.³⁸⁹ But larger factors were at work to encourage interest in Roman antiquities: the first important excavation of a Roman site began in 1874 when the new Italian state sponsored the exploration of the Colosseum; readers in Britain were kept abreast of these developments by Rodolfo Lanciani's regular reports in the columns of *The Athenaeum*.³⁹⁰ A much more dramatic development was brought about by improved steamship and rail communication in Europe: in 1864 Thomas Cook offered his first package tour to Italy taking in Florence, Rome and Naples.³⁹¹ The Grand Tour was now within the reach of the British bourgeoisie. On May 1st 1863 the Senate of Glasgow University received the following communication from Ramsay 'it is my intention to present to the University Court at their next meeting a petition requesting permission to retire upon the plea of long and continued bad health'.³⁹² His successor was his nephew George Ramsay appointed on July 6th after submitting as test piece an essay on Etruscan Ethics.³⁹³ If there was a golden age in Latin studies it was presided over by this man; at the end of his career he calculated that in his 43 years as

³⁸⁷ The fifteenth edition was 'revised and partly re-written' by Lanciani, Professor of Ancient Topography at Rome.

³⁸⁸ Ramsay's obituarist in the DNB draws attention to his entry on Cicero in Smith's *magnum opus*.

³⁸⁹ Smith's published format was also larger Imperial 8vo as opposed to Ramsay's Large Crown 8vo.

³⁹⁰ See K. Hopkins and M. Beard *The Colosseum* (2005) p 172.

³⁹¹ Thomas Cook (1808-1892) began his career in mass tourism in 1841 exploiting the newly opened Midland Railway, tours to Scotland by boat and train soon followed and by 1872 he was offering a 212 day round the world tour for 200 guineas.

³⁹² *Minutes of Senate 1859-1865* p. 249 (Glasgow University Archives SEN 1/1/7 Vol. 91)

³⁹³ Not a unique situation for members of the same family to hold Glasgow chairs e.g. James Thomson (Mathematics 1834-1849), his sons James (Engineering 1873-1889) and William, Lord Kelvin (Natural Philosophy 1846-1899).

Professor he had taught 'some 17,000 undergraduates'; and in one session (1879-1880) he had 649 students 'the largest number of students ever enrolled in a Scottish university'.³⁹⁴ He was educated at Rugby and from there he went to Trinity College, Oxford where he found the teaching 'excellent but dull'.³⁹⁵ He worked as an assistant to his uncle from April 1860 onwards; the Latin chair was, it seems, in the gift of the occupant. It was at this period that he witnessed at close quarters how his uncle dealt with the Latin classes of over 200 students:

How dull is the system of mere written examinations compared to...those direct methods of oral teaching by sharp suggestive questions on the Socratic model, which was a tradition in all the literary classes of the old College...methods which I rejoice to see recognised by all sound educationalists as the model on which all languages, ancient or modern, should be taught.³⁹⁶

He recalled too about this early period in his teaching career:

It was here that I got my first glimpse of the quality of the Scottish student - not the Honours man only, but the ordinary Pass student also that representative of the average intelligence of the community at large, which some of the would-be English reformers are seeking to banish from our Universities altogether, the student who has come from, and perhaps will go back to, the shop, the warehouse or the farm, or who goes abroad and makes people ask 'What is it that makes these Scotsmen get on so much better than other people?'³⁹⁷

One thing Ramsay certainly did on appointment was to expand the set book list: by 1874 for an Ordinary Degree the student had to master *Aeneid* (Book IX), Horace's *Odes* (Books I and III), translation from English into Latin prose and finally to answer questions on

³⁹⁴ *Proceedings* (1907) p. 15.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid* p.12.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid* pp.11-12.

‘Grammar, History and Antiquities’.³⁹⁸ The biggest change is however for those wishing to pursue Honours: in verse, all of Virgil and Horace and either four books of Lucretius or the whole of Juvenal apart from Books II, VI and IX and in prose, Cicero the *Philippics*, Livy five Books, Tacitus *Annals* I-VI. These were to be studied together with ‘Latin Composition, History and Antiquities &c. Passages also from unseen authors will be prescribed’.³⁹⁹ This was a very demanding programme by anyone’s standards.

Perhaps the best close-up of George Ramsay’s philosophy and teaching methods are provided by his evidence given to the Royal Commission on the Scottish Universities of 1878: all professors were called, but Ramsay spoke longer, in greater depth and was the only witness to be recalled. It is very hard to resist the impression that he was regarded by his peers and by the Commissioners as the spokesman for Scottish classical learning.⁴⁰⁰ He is asked first about the new system of appointing professors, where the new University Courts made appointments, rather than, as under the old system the Faculty:

I have found it extremely difficult to make myself really understood by persons not having special knowledge and experience in that branch of knowledge.⁴⁰¹

He is then asked about the importance of science within the modern university curriculum:

the admission of science as part of the general liberal training of the University, and its treatment as a special department of knowledge... are two totally different questions... If we look at the most authoritative discussions of this question we find that while everybody desires to see science admitted, no educationalist, no man charged with the whole training of young men’s minds, has as yet pronounced that out of science can be made as effective an instrument for the discipline of the intelligence and character as out of the old branches of education.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁸ Calendar 1874-1875.

³⁹⁹ Ibid. Contrast Ramsay’s set book list with that of the 1820s see Table 2 (c)

⁴⁰⁰ The Commissioners were Lord Justice Inglis, Lord Moncrieff, Right Honourable Lionel Playfair, Sir William Maxwell, Lord Ardmillan, Dr John Muir, J A Froude, A C Campbell, Professor Huxley and J. A. Campbell.

⁴⁰¹ *Report of the Royal Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Universities of Scotland* Vol. 2 p.p.531-532.

⁴⁰² Ibid, p.540.

Just for good measure Ramsay adds as a postscript 'as a rule boys who are good in classics and mathematics are good also in science'.⁴⁰³ He then develops his reasons for opposing specialisation:

There is nothing so opposed to true cultivation, nothing so unreasonable, as excessive narrowness of mind; nothing contributes to remove this narrowness so much as that clear understanding of language which lays open the thoughts of others to ready appreciation. Nor is equal clearness of thought to be obtained in any other way. Clearness of thought is bound up with clearness of language, and the one is impossible without the other.⁴⁰⁴

He is absolute as to the importance of the classical canon within Scottish culture:

It is to the classics that Scotland is indebted for its position as the best educated country of Europe, and it is impossible to overvalue the debt which Scotland owes to the classics in the formation of its national intelligence.⁴⁰⁵

Ramsay then goes on to criticise the funding regime, the New Code⁴⁰⁶, in Scottish schools:

In the opinion of the Inspectors of Schools....the tendency is to this effect, that the four shillings are gained in the scientific subject by a few weeks cramming, representing no real training whatever, whereas the classical subject requires at each stage really efficient drilling for a whole year. The strongest case I brought forward was that of a well known schoolmaster, who, out of twenty pupils, obtained from the Science and Art Department £120 in one year with easy work, and who, if he had passed all those pupils in Latin and Greek under the Code, could only have earned £8.⁴⁰⁷

The questioning then moves on to assessment issues:

⁴⁰³ Ibid. Neither Ramsay nor the Commissioners questioned the status of classics within British education in the 1870s.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid, p 541.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid, p 543.

⁴⁰⁶ The New Code Ramsay is attacking was introduced as a result of the 1872 Education Act (Scotland) and funding regime created by this legislation. See A.C. Sellar *Manual of the Education Act for Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1872) p. 43

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid, p 544.

With us in Glasgow the class work and the class competition are much more important and are considered more value both by the public and the students than the University examinations...In classical subjects it is of the greatest importance that the student be required to use his knowledge upon fresh subjects unhelped in the class. I would not think highly of a degree gained merely by examinations in work done or lectures delivered, in the classes attended.

One of the targets for Ramsay's ire is clearly the examination restricted to the set book list:

The Council urged upon the Senate [at Glasgow] that in classics the examination was too difficult, and they wished to establish the principle that the examination should only be in the subjects read in the class. The Senate was induced at first to support that proposal. I opposed it strenuously...I produced evidence from almost every University in Great Britain, from teachers and professors, that they would look upon it as most disastrous that the examination in classics should be confined to the books read...The difficulty in the classics is this, that if you give a man a small amount to do, he may positively learn the whole of the crib by heart; I have known a case where a man, misled by a word, wrote by heart a wrong page. I do not think that has occurred in the examination for the Arts degree.⁴⁰⁸

His argument seems to be, if not in favour of 'unseens', then, a least a reading list too broad to be memorised from cribs. Ramsay then points to baleful effects of the examination system in England: 'At Oxford the cry of the University reformers is that the teaching is entirely dwarfed and controlled by examinations.'⁴⁰⁹ The questions then turn to the issue of whether Greek should be made optional or replaced by a modern language:

I think it would be a serious blow to the whole system of classical instruction of Scotland to make Greek an optional subject; and on the same grounds as those as those on which I would keep up our old classical system. I would be strongly

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, p.547.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, p.548.

opposed to Greek being supplanted by modern languages....Modern languages are studied and taught with a view to practical use, not with a view to culture.⁴¹⁰

The next issue that was addressed was the student cohort that Ramsay and his two assistants teach at Glasgow, Ramsay's initial point being 'the best students are not the oldest', he then tabulates the first year in terms of age. Out of 260 students in the first year:

Table 5 (a) Age of Glasgow Students (Humanity) 1876

Number of Students	Age at Matriculation
2	14
6	15
19	16
19	17
14	18
17	19

Of the remaining first year students (i.e. 183) 'there are a few up to 34...At the age of 20; the number drops down to 12'.⁴¹¹ It seems from Ramsay's evidence to the Commission that the first year class would include those aged fourteen and bench mates who were twenty years older, but the median age was 19.2.⁴¹²

This situation must have created enormous teaching problems not just as to the size of the classes but because the eldest were, if Ramsay was correct, the least able. His statistics suggest that those who matriculated aged over 20 had very little proficiency in Latin but this may have simply meant that standards were rising in the university thus making it more difficult for those who attempted to very largely teach themselves the ancient tongue. He then describes the background of his younger students: 36% from elementary schools

⁴¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 553-554.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p 555.

⁴¹² Ibid p.555.

and 42% from secondary schools, a statistic he uses to attack the idea of entrance examinations as it would deny the product of the elementary school from entering university.⁴¹³

Playfair, one of the Commissioners notes a unique feature of the Scottish system: 'In Scotland a teacher often goes up after he chooses a profession and so raises the average age?' Ramsay agrees and makes what for the Scottish Universities is a very significant point :

the first principle ...is to aim at is the establishment of a degree which shall represent a satisfactory amount of culture and I would not degrade our University course by making it simply a means of satisfying the demands of the professions...It is quite contrary to my idea of what the Arts course should be that the University should give a degree without any knowledge of Greek.⁴¹⁴

Ramsay's colleague R. C. Jebb produced detailed class registers for his Junior Greek class showing not just the age range (15-34) but also the students who were absolute beginners.

⁴¹³ Ibid. pp. 558-559.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid p 556.

Table 5	<u>Session 1886-87</u>	<u>University of Glasgow</u>	<u>Junior Greek</u>	<u>5th February 1887</u>
(b)			Class	

Summary of Statistics

X Time not mentioned	2	1 Not more than 3 months	22
O No Greek before this session	24	2 Not more than 6 months	13
⊖ Less than 1 month	2	3 Not more than 1 year	19
		4 More than a year	7

Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time	Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time	Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time
Reid	Joannes	337	B	18	4	Campbell	Gulielmus	187	9	19	3	McNeill	Georgius	124	B	15	1
Risk	Robertus	307	4	17	3	Malcolm	Jacobus	183	22	19	2	Campbell	Petrus	123	5	19	0
Macaulay	Archibaldus	307	23	21	3	Pender	Gulielmus	182	2	24	0	Gellally	Jacobus	122	22	21	1
Williamson	Gulielmus	295	8	23	3	Brown	Jacobus	177	1	24	2	Shaw	Carolus	120	24	17	3
Arnold	Hugo	276	22	18	4	McNeill	Joannes	177	B	14	1	Brown	Gulielmus	119	6	19	1
McInnes	Alexander	271	5	19	0	Harvie	Joannes	175	9	22	2	Hardie	Robertus	119	25	30	1
Clark	David	267	23	26	0	Graham	David	172	24	22	2	Forsyth	Moses	113	1	22	Θ
McColl	Malcolmbus	247	6	15	3	Paul	Robertus	171	1	16	0	Wilson	Robertus	108	4	20	1
McGhie	Thomas	245	5	24	0	Fletcher	Duncanus	170	8	21	2	Malloch	Donaldus	105	2	17	1
Mackay	Gulielmus	245	25	21	0	Blair	Kenmure	169	3	28	0	McIntyre	Duncanus	105	7	17	3
Thomson	Petrus	243	8	15	3	King	Alexander	169	24	20	2	Andrews					
Macharg	Gulielmus	240	1	16	3	Grant	Gulielmus	168	5	22	3	Peacock	Albertus	104	2	18	X

Macdonald	Joannes	238	1	20	1	Scrimgeour	Carolus	168	24	29	0	MacLennan	Donaldus	99	25	21	0
Grant	Donaldus	238	2	17	3	Bayne	David	166	24	16	3	Whiteside	Thomas	96	5	22	2
Sanders	Archibaldus	233	3	18	3	Taylor	Gulielmus	159	9	29	0	Miller	Matthaeus	94	4	17	1
Jamieson	Petrus	233	8	17	4	Fairley	Joannes	152	B	16	1	Scouller	Jacobus	93	26	19	2
	Alexander (1)	229	26	17	4	Sanders	Joannes	148	4	20	3	Patmore	Andreas	92	7	15	2
Campbell	Joannes	227	25	21	0	Hope	Joannes	148	6	23	Θ	Barrowman	Thomas	90	25	17	2
McArthur	Georgius	224	4	17	0	Whyte	Quintinus	145	3	18	X		Duncanus	86	4	19	1
	Thomas	218	2	23	0	Aitchison	Jacobus	144	6	19	1	Campbell	Alexander (2)	83	B	17	0
Peterson																	
Kearney	Thomas	211	22	20	2	Gibson		144	6	16	1	McLintock	Finlay	81	26	16	1
Hastings	Gulielmus	209	8	16	2	Moore	Cecil	144	7	17	4	Taylor	Josephus	74	7	16	3
Dick	Joannes	208	3	25	1	Hunter	Andreas	144	26	27	0	McAra	Alexander	75	26	18	0
Shannon	Gulielmus	206	1	19	3	Osbourne	Carolus	142	3	18	0	Buchanan	Joannes	70	8	19	3
Boyd	Jacobus	204	23	21	1	Grant	Lachlanus	139	B	15	3	Dunlop	Georgius	65	5	17	0
Hamilton	Gulielmus	202	23	26	1	Paterson	Gulielmus	135	1	26	1	Cunningham	Simon	47	22	24	1
Brown	Alexander	196	23	25	1	Campbell	David	132	22	17	4	Mackinlay	Joannes	44	7	17	0
Semple	Joannes	194	3	18	3	Cameron	Robertus	132	24	20	4	Macritchie	Murdo	30	9	26	0
Mackay	Gulielmus	193	6	26	0	Kirkwood		132	25	16	2	Allan	Jacobus	ab	26		
Bonar	Jacobus	191	2	20	1	Hogg	Gulielmus	127	23	19	0						
Paterson	Joannes	191	9	28	0												
exd JBD ⁴¹⁵																	

⁴¹⁵ The initials are of J.B. Douglas an External Examiner Jebb appointed on an annual basis

Table 5 (c) Junior Greek Class, Glasgow. Source MS Gen 1689/2

February
2nd 1889Session 1888 - 89University of GlasgowJunior Greek
Class

Results of Examination 2nd February, 1889. 10AM 1

Summary of Statistics

X Time not mentioned	9
O No Greek before this session	23
⊕ Less than 1 month	1
1 Not more than 3 months	21
2 Not more than 6 months	9
3 Not more than one year	9
4 More than a year	7

Maximum 350

Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time	Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time	Surname	Forename	Marks	Bench	Age	Time
Clark	Gulielmus	326	4	26	3	Eadie	Petrus	196	23	22	0	Japp	Fredricus	128	2	17	1
Macdonald	Ronaldus	311	23	21	4	McLennan	Georgius	193	8	21	4	Lennox	David	126	22	19	1
Macleod	Kenneth	293	1	17	3	Campbell	Josephus	189	2	21	1	Miller	Petrus	121	24	24	X
Steven	Gulielmus	290	5	15	X	Gemmell	Andreas	185	2	20	1	Grant	Georgius	116	5	22	X
Baird	Jacobus	286	7	16	4	Young	David	185	24	17	⊕		Jacobus	112	7	23	0
Borthwick	Jacobus	282	7	22	0	Higgins	Jacobus	185	5	17	0	Kennedy	David	105	A	19	0
MacKenzie	Rodericus (2)	282	25	22	1	Craig	Jacobus	182	6	20	0	Craise	Alexander	103	5	24	2
Irving	Georgius	279	B	19	4	Watson	Jacobus	182	B	20	3	Aitken	Joannes	98	7	21	0

Dewar	Jacobus	268	3	19	2		Gulielmus	180	1	26	3	Black	Jacobus	90	8	26
Gillespie	Jacobus	267	3	21	0	Cairnie	Carolus	179	5	16	1		Joannes	90	6	29
Wilson	Joannes	265	1	24	1	Maclauchlan	Franciscus	179	6	17	X	Miller	Jacobus	89	B	20
Muir	Robertus	263	23	27	2	Garrow	Alexander	177	1	23	1	Allan	Robertus	87	2	17
Reid	Robertus	257	25	20	1	Roberts	Jacobus	175	4	17	3	MacGregor	Joannes	79	25	19
Ford	Georgius	255	2	19	2	Burdon	Carolus	174	4	26	2	McLure	Joannes	77	A	17
Carruthers	Jacobus	252	4	18	1	Minto	Georgius	172	B	23	1	Blades	Jacobus	76	6	20
MacKee	Jacobus	251	A	16	4	MacKenzie	Rodericus (1)	166	24	33	0	McDonald	Malcolmbus	71	25	25
Logan	Joannes	250	B	20	4	Hamilton	Jacobus	160	22	19	0	Smith	David	67	4	17
Paterson	Joannes	244	B	20	1	Cairns	Franciscus	158	23	22	0	McArthur	Gilbertus	60	1	18
Lochhead	Daniel	237	2	16	2	McDougall	Archibaldus	156	8	19	3	Hutchison	Gulielmus	59	A	15
Irving	Gulielmus	235	8	21	3	Allan	Thomas	153	23		1		Gulielmus	58	8	22
Macdairmid	Alexander	235	23	20	2		Joannes	150	22	23	X	Taylor	Gulielmus	49	3	20
Brown	Henricus	229	1	20	3		Carolus	137	7	16	1	Dawson	Joannes	43	24	24
Sutherland	Jacobus	213	7	18	0	Harvey	Carolus	136	A	16	0	Livingston	Archibaldus	37	24	20
Robertson	Jacobus	213	22	25	1	Pender	Josephus	135	22	18	4	Bennett	Petrus	22	25	34
Campbell	Archibaldus	208	3	20	2	Aitken	David	132	22	20	X	Walker	Jacobus	19	25	31
McAllister	Andreas	208	3	20	1	Dunlop	Georgius	131	3	22	1	Rutherford	Jacobus	ab		0
Girvan	Jacobus	202	6	18	0	McAllister	Alexander	131	5	24	0					

When Ramsay was recalled by the Commission⁴¹⁶ he described what he regards as a flaw in the Scottish system of teaching classics:

I think that one of the defects of our Scottish system has been that in consequence of the professorial system, Latin and Greek have been too much taught apart. No man can teach Latin well who has not made himself acquainted with Greek social life, history, and so on. The converse perhaps does not apply so much: but certainly Latin and the spirit of Roman history cannot be understood without constant reference to Greek history and literature.⁴¹⁷

He then made what might have been a sly dig at unnamed colleagues:

Every one can point to instances of men who would never have taken professorships in Scotch universities, but for the inducement which the six months clear vacation for literary leisure affords them.⁴¹⁸

He then goes on to explain the utter necessity of having an assistant to teach these large classes, the professor supplements the official salary of £100 a year to this assistant with £150 out of his own pocket. Ramsay then details the workload of marking shared by him and his assistants:⁴¹⁹

The papers set and looked over, between myself and my assistant were fourteen in number, some of which were done by as many as 260 students.⁴²⁰ Some of these papers took ten days, some a fortnight, of hard work at every spare moment to look over and examine. We had fourteen of these papers in the class, and besides these ten examinations of a public character - that is to say degree papers, either for pass

⁴¹⁶ October 9th 1876, the twenty second day of the hearings.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid p. 953.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid p.968.

⁴¹⁹ Ramsay's Assistant at the time was Alexander McEwen and in November 1877 a second Assistant was appointed, William King a former Snell Exhibitioner (*University of Glasgow Court Record* C1/1/1 p. 493)

⁴²⁰ i.e.3, 640 scripts was the maximum possible figure, but Ramsay doesn't reveal the true total.

or honours, bursary or preliminary examinations, examinations for special prizes, for the Snell exhibition and so forth.⁴²¹

Then the professor describes how the weekly work is divided, there are four hours teaching each day:

He [his assistant] and I subdivide the classes this way, that on some days I take three out of the four, and on some days less. He takes the third year class two days a week on special subjects; I take it on three. This year, for instance, he takes two days on Tacitus and I take the other three days on Juvenal and Persius. In the same manner, he takes two hours in the week of the senior [i.e. second year class] class at 9 a.m. I take it on the other three days. In the same way I take the eight o'clock junior class, and he takes the eleven o'clock junior class, reading one subject in the hour and another subject in the other.

The Junior Humanity class is divided on the basis of the voluntary initial examination, which Ramsay had already detailed, into 'good, fair and below the mark'.⁴²² In addition Ramsay goes on to explain how he is planning, in what represented a radical departure from the Scottish tradition, to provide extra support for his undergraduates:

I am this winter [1876] organising...a kind of tutorial staff. I have arranged with some former excellent students of mine who are anxious and desirous to teach ...to take a certain amount of teaching work under my supervision. The junior and senior classes are....to do voluntary work for the tutor at a special hour... hope thus in some degree to realise what I think is the great desideratum of our teaching, - a combination of the professorial and tutorial system'.⁴²³

These tutors it appears are undergraduates at Glasgow who had completed their Humanity classes under Ramsay: three such tutors are to be appointed, two paid by Ramsay and a

⁴²¹ Ibid, p. 959.

⁴²² Ibid, p.960.

⁴²³ Ibid, p. 960. 'Assistants are all appointed by the Professors, subject to the approval and control of the University Court...other assistants are approved and paid by the Professor'. *University of Glasgow Calendar 1874-1875* p. 25. The former category of Senior Assistant received a salary of £100 p.a., no salary is given for the latter type of appointment

third who was already in receipt of a Euing Fellowship and was to be allowed to charge 10s 6d per student.⁴²⁴ Ramsay then shifts to a particular pastoral concern:

I have never known a year pass without students in my class breaking down in health, sometimes for life. I find it necessary constantly to warn students against overwork, especially those engaged in work beyond their class-work.⁴²⁵

To underline this point, Ramsay produces employment statistics about his Junior Humanity class; he had earlier in the term issued a questionnaire to the 307 students this class, ‘which is the largest class there has ever been in the University’, and 283 students had replied. The results fall into three categories:

Table 5(d) Part-time Students Glasgow Junior Humanity Class 1876

1 The 97 students who attend ‘at only one hour in the day, because they are engaged in offices or otherwise throughout the day’ (this is presumably the 8 am class)

Post	Numbers
Clerks in law offices	56
School teachers	30
Miscellaneous employment	3
Trade or business	3
Missionaries	2
Unknown	3

⁴²⁴ This seems to have been a unique venture, neither Jebb nor Murray adopted such a scheme
⁴²⁵ Ibid p. 963.

2 The next category are the 44 who attend 2 hours of the Latin class but have to work some time, every day in the winter

Post	Numbers
In trade	7
In offices	7
Teachers	12
Miscellaneous	10
Missionaries	8

3 Those who ‘are obliged to resort to some occupation in the summer’

Post	Numbers
In trade or business	21
In offices	14
Teachers, the most of them from the Highlands who have substitutes in the winter	17
Miscellaneous	22

Thus Ramsay reaches the conclusion that only 60 (i.e. less than 30%) of his Junior Humanity class ‘are free to prosecute their studies during the entire course, summer and winter, without having to engage in some occupation’. He conducted the same operation with his Senior Humanity class and 107 responded

5 (e) Part –time Students Glasgow Senior Humanity Class 1876

Post	Numbers
Teachers	39
Law and other offices	14
Mission work	7
Farm work	4
Miscellaneous	38
Unknown	5

This reveals a situation far different from the experience of English undergraduates at the time.⁴²⁶

As he draws towards the end of his testimony Ramsay seems hardly able to resist the temptation of scoring points off his old alma mater Oxford, he proclaims:

the position of the professors in the Scotch Universities is quite unique, and I attribute the success of the Scotch Universities to that circumstance. The professors combine the two functions of being in great measure laborious teachers of large classes, and at the same time students anxious to advance their various subjects... Now, in England you find first-rate teaching given by equally good men in the great public schools, but the work they have to do is so overwhelming, and extends over so many months of the year, that it is almost impossible for them to do anything in the way of writing. That is the reason why so little good work has been produced by Oxford and Cambridge scholars.⁴²⁷

Finally Ramsay raises an issue which has dogged education for the last 130 years:

with us teaching controls examination, and not examination teaching. If a set of private teachers be privileged to coach students for a Pass

⁴²⁶ Ibid, pp.965-967. It is perhaps worth noting that when Jebb gave his testimony, after Ramsay, he provided detailed profiles of his students' knowledge of Greek at matriculation but nothing on their circumstances. See Vol. III pp.410-412.

⁴²⁷ Ibid, p.967.

examination, the result will not be culture, but cram, and the successful extra-mural teacher would be a man like a successful crammer for the Civil Service of India, the man who succeeds in manufacturing the greatest possible number of successful competitors. Even in Indian examinations this is considered a serious evil.⁴²⁸

Over the two days giving evidence Ramsay had produced a bravura performance: a defence of the Scottish approach to the classics, a detailed portrait of his own work and the problems he faced, but also he challenged the received wisdom that in some way Scottish university classical teaching was in some way inferior to that south of the Tweed.

Like his uncle before him and in the Scottish classical tradition of Dalziel, Sandford and Dunbar, Ramsay produced a textbook for the use of students; but his was a far more ambitious venture than William Ramsay's work on Latin prosody. The title and the publisher of this work give some indication as to George Ramsay's target audience: the work first appeared in 1883 as a single volume and was entitled *Latin Prose Composition. Adapted for the Scotch Leaving Certificate and University Preliminary Examinations* and was published by the Clarendon Press. He was clearly aiming at the schools market both sides of the border, as well as those attending crammers and any latter-day David Livingstone's attempting to teach themselves the elements of Latin prose. He was quite clear as to the value of such skills:

I have now for nearly thirty years been engaged in teaching Latin Prose, not only for the purposes of higher scholarship, or with a view to classical examinations, but also to those whose main requirement is to gain command over their own language for the practical work of life: to acquire clearness of thought, power of logical

⁴²⁸ Ibid, p 969 .The Indian Civil .Service examinations, after the reforms of 1855, caused great disquiet in Scotland as the Scottish universities felt these examinations were deliberately constructed to favour Oxbridge applicants and those rich enough to pay a crammer. An analysis of the Oxbridge bias in these examinations is provided by P. Vasunia 'Greek, Latin and the Indian Civil Service', *Cambridge Classical Journal* Vol. 51 (2005) pp.21-34

comprehension, correctness and purity in the use of language, and, if possible, simplicity and force of style. For this purpose, the study of Latin Prose forms and unrivalled discipline.⁴²⁹

‘Medicus’: A Glasgow Student’s View of Ramsay

As with his uncle we have a portrait of George Ramsay’s teaching but from a source that is less than benign to Ramsay and his academic colleagues. In the academic session 1882-1883 a series of five anonymous pamphlets circulated around the University, and city, of Glasgow entitled *University Pamphlets*, edited by one named as ‘Medicus’.⁴³⁰ This work is a wide-ranging attack on the quality of teaching at Glasgow in the Arts and Medical Faculty. The general tone can be suggested by two quotations:

the Department of Arts is one in which no Art is ever taught, except the Art of Hypocrisy, which is cultivated all over Gilmorehill [site of the campus] with excessive care.⁴³¹

or again ‘Really there is nothing like an Arts Professorship for making money’.⁴³² Even the professor with a world wide reputation does not escape censure

the high priest of Electricity [Kelvin] ...has a complete incapacity to communicate knowledge (he possesses), an utter inability to teach.⁴³³

Ramsay’s Junior Humanity class is described in some detail, from the welcome on the first day:

In the Humanity Class this year,’ said Professor Ramsay in 1879, ‘are included joiners, miners, stewards of steamers, a toll-keeper, a pocketbook-maker, a blacksmith with others’. But the Professor of Humanity then goes on to deliver his

⁴²⁹ Volume II Third edition, 1893 *Preface* p. v.

⁴³⁰ The pamphlets were entitled as follows: two named *Actuals*, two *Personal Experiences*, *Considerations by the Way* and finally *Conclusion*. Apart from Medicus, the other authors were ‘M.A. and M.A. and Others.’ The University of Glasgow Special Collections has a copy of these pamphlets once owned by the Glasgow bibliophile and antiquarian David Murray (Mu 21-d36) and on the flyleaf in Murray’s hand is the comment: ‘The editor and principal author was James Kelly M.D.’ Medicus claimed sales figures of 1000 copies and it certainly went into a second edition.

⁴³¹ *Actuals* p 15.

⁴³² *Actuals* p. 52.

⁴³³ *Personal Experiences* I p 73.

first dictum to the class. After a prayer in the most approved Anglican type - uttered by the Professor with eyes wide open...we heard a 45 minutes' address on the value of education, chiefly of that afforded by Universities in general, and by the University of Glasgow in particular. The lecturer warned us especially against 'vulgar and material pursuits.' There were many bits of good advice in the speech...but no passage in it was more appreciated than an anecdote of a German Professor. The latter was pointed out as a man of prodigious learning. 'That man, Sir, made himself a name that shall go resounding through all the centuries, - that man, Sir, knows more than any man of past or present times, has studied-mastered completely...all about Bugs! Gentlemen beware of specialism' ⁴³⁴

But Ramsay comes under fire for two reasons in this attack: the inadequacy of the teaching due to the class size and his dilatory approach to completing the reading list. The former charge is laid by a matter of simple arithmetic:

In Professor Ramsay's Junior Latin Class there are 400 students. The class is divided into two sections, each meets two hours a day. There are, say, 115 working days in the session, and this will give 460 hours to a class of 400. Allowing half an hour daily for the professor's lectures, explanations &c, there are 230 hours left for the examination of students. It is said that each student is examined from five to ten times, say six times, in the course of the session - that is, once a month. That will make 2,400 examinations in 230 hours, or about eleven per hour - that is *five* minutes to each student. The case then stands thus:-Each student in the Junior Latin class is examined once a month for five minutes, making a grand total of half an hour in six months. ⁴³⁵

As to Ramsay's slow progress through the reading list:

During the five months only half the works proscribed had been gone over, and the students were left to do within ten days the other half. It was intimated that the later

⁴³⁴ *Personal Experiences* pp. 10-11.

⁴³⁵ *Actuals* pp. 21-22.

was ‘voluntary’ work, but we were also carefully informed that a good certificate could only be got by attempting the whole.⁴³⁶

The portrait that emerges of Ramsay from these generally very hostile philippics is of a man, who, if not a perfect teacher, was very well liked by his charges,

there is a refinement in Professor R[amsay] which one likes and feels to be the property of a gentleman....I found in him an amount of ‘heart’ and a genuine desire for the students’ welfare that is not shewn by every Professor.⁴³⁷

This in marked contrast to the portrait that is painted of Jebb, who is seen as an efficient teacher ‘[he] is the nearest approach to a perfect teacher’ but seems a person who lacks the salt of common humanity, at least in Scottish students’ eyes:

I remember seeing him shove a fellow off his platform; this fellow had wanted to say something to Jebb, and in order to do so had presumed to position himself on local equality: but Jebb performed the above operation with not the best of grace, and forced the fellow to make his remarks ‘out of the depths’. Jebb ought to remember that he is not a more gifted man, nor a more successful teacher than his predecessors in the Greek Chair...Moreover scholarship does not exempt a man in his position from the duty of exercising kindly acts towards his students.⁴³⁸

.But at the last all the professors were damned by *Medicus*; the conclusion drawn by him was simply that, in the case of the University of Glasgow, the lucky Professors, have found ‘a mine for money’.⁴³⁹

Two events at the beginning of the twentieth century, and towards the end of George Ramsay’s long reign at Glasgow, had important consequences for the teaching of classics in Scotland; one where he was directly involved and one where the economic consequences were very significant. On Saturday March 1st 1902 at the Royal High School

⁴³⁶ *Personal Experiences* (third pamphlet) p 28. All this rather undermines Ramsay’s assertion, to the Royal Commission in 1878, that students need to be examined in more than just the set book list.

⁴³⁷ *Personal Experiences* (I) p. 3.

⁴³⁸ *Personal Experiences* p. 41.

⁴³⁹ *Actuals* p. 51.

of Edinburgh, the foundation meeting took place of the Classical Association of Scotland 'Nearly all the professors of Classics in Scotland, a majority of Classical teachers, and several eminent teachers of English' formed the core of the membership of 189 subscribers.⁴⁴⁰ The aim of the organisation was according to the Rules was

to bring together for practical conference all persons interested in Classical Study and Education; to promote communication and comparison of views between Universities and Schools; to discuss subjects and methods of Teaching and Examination, and any other questions of interest to Classical Scholars that may from time to time arise.⁴⁴¹

Ramsay was elected unopposed as the first President but as he pointed out in his inaugural address, in November 1902 he was flattered but not deceived:

This honour I am well aware, I owe rather to the somewhat dubious merit of seniority, as the oldest Classical Professor - indeed the senior Professor of any kind...in Scotland rather than to any special merit of my own.⁴⁴²

He then warmed to the theme of his Lecture, 'Efficiency in Education', where as usual he was prepared to take head on the argument about why students should learn 'dead' languages and his approach is to address the concern of the age that:

our education is falling behind that of other nations; what are the elements which the training of the national intellect is defective; these topics are passed over in silence. We have cared more for such questions in Scotland; but when our Scotch members do their best to direct attention to the practical details of the subject, we are told on all hands that Scotch MPs are insufferably dull, and they are allowed to air their eloquence to listless reporters and empty benches.⁴⁴³

He ends with the clarion call:

⁴⁴⁰ *Classical Association of Scotland. Proceedings 1902-03* (Edinburgh, 1903), by 1912 the membership was 324.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid*, p 124.

⁴⁴² *Ibid*, p1.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 5.

The country is ready for a large measure of devolution; is it too much to hope that we may have in Scotland as much freedom in our higher education as has been granted with such excellent results to Wales.⁴⁴⁴

George Ramsay's last important work of scholarship was a two-volume translation and commentary on Tacitus' *Annals* [1904-1909], 'he was the pioneer of commentaries on translations'.⁴⁴⁵ This work was clearly meant to complement the Furneaux edition [1891-1896] which gave Latin text but little on the historical context. Ramsay was under no illusions about the English Victorian classical tradition and those translations which owed their existence to no literary impulse, they met the needs of schoolboys and passmen, of examiners and examinations and that demand for mere verbal accuracy in Latin and Greek scholarship which came in with the early part of the last century, Classical scholarship had become largely a matter of verbalism, books were read not for their matter, but for their language only...that was the time when a minute knowledge of the niceties of Greek and Latin was regarded as the supreme mark of intellectual eminence guaranteeing even fitness for episcopal office.⁴⁴⁶

But the most important development to affect Scotland's ancient universities at the end of the Victorian period was initiated by a Trust Deed created by the man widely regarded, in 1901, as the second richest man in the world⁴⁴⁷ Andrew Carnegie.⁴⁴⁸

His gift of \$10,000,000 was to be controlled by a trust consisting of leading Scottish aristocrats and politicians:

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid p. 32 The Scotch Education was renamed the Scottish Education Department in 1918 and was based in Whitehall as indeed was the Scottish Office, established in 1885.

⁴⁴⁵ R. Knox *Classical Association of Scotland. Centenary Lecture. October 2002.* (Glasgow, 2002) p 5.

⁴⁴⁶ *Annals* Vol. 2 Introduction pp. xxiii-xxxiv.

⁴⁴⁷ 'Measured in today's dollars, Carnegie would have been worth over \$100 billion at the height of his wealth, bested only by Rockefeller, who would have been worth \$200 billion' P Krass *Carnegie* (John Wiley & Son, New Jersey 2002) p 536.

⁴⁴⁸ J. Robb *The Carnegie Trust for Universities of Scotland 1901-1926* (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh 1927) pp.16-17.

It was a notable body of men: Prime Minister Balfour, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (afterwards Prime Minister), John Morley (later Viscount Morley), James Bryce (later Viscount Bryce), the Earl of Elgin and Lord Rosebery.⁴⁴⁹

The philanthropist was very anxious to give all financial powers over to the Trustees but none to the Scottish universities themselves. In essence the funds were distributed under three distinct headings: block grants to large capital programmes over a five year period, an area from which the classics were very specifically excluded; endowment of research projects and finally and very importantly the payment of class fees for poorer students. Carnegie's millions dramatically changed the economic fortunes of Scotland's universities; the Carnegie Trust's decision to pay class fees of poorer students benefited indirectly the classics as all in 1902 were expected to attend, in the Arts Faculty, the Humanity classes.

George Ramsay was the most robust and eloquent defender of the Scottish tradition and presided over what now seems the golden age for such studies. Carnegie by his munificence ensured that poor but able student could still, as with David Livingstone in 1836, be able to matriculate at one of Scotland's four ancient universities. The health of Scottish classical studies at her universities depended upon the country's schools who provided of undergraduates competent if not in Greek, then certainly in Latin. The focus must now shift to the Scottish schools of the period which could train the aspirant in the one essential skill for university entry, as Livingstone himself discovered, competence in Humanity.

⁴⁴⁹ *Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie*. With a foreword by Cecelia Tichi (Boston, 1986) p 258.

Chapter Six

‘The Active Business of Life’: Teaching Classics in the schools of Nineteenth Century Scotland

The education of universities instituted as it has been as a preparation for the learned professions must from its nature be tedious and expensive and ill suited to the circumstances of the great bulk of the people in a commercial country. Even among those who have been educated, well-formulated complaints are frequently made that speculation and the indolent habits of a university have rather tended to unfit than qualify them for the active business of life. Sensible of these disadvantages and desirous not only that their youth should be more completely instructed in the most necessary and useful parts of learning ...Gentlemen in different parts of the Kingdom have procured the establishment of Academies.

Prospectus of Ayr Academy August 1794⁴⁵⁰

It is possible to trace in some detail the political and cultural forces that in the nineteenth century radically reorganised the structure and management of Scotland's schools. As has been pointed out already in Chapter 1 there were, in the eighteenth century, various campaigns aimed at modernising the curriculum of Scottish schools in order to provide an educational system more relevant to the mercantile classes of Scotland; Ayr Academy is used in the following chapter as an illustration of this process.

The Royal Commission appointed in 1864 under the chairmanship of the Duke of Argyll was given the task of examining all aspects of Scottish schooling. The publications of the Argyll Commission were comprehensive and indeed exhaustive:

The three Reports of the Commission, four volumes in all, together with three special reports, were published between the years 1865-68. The most significant was the report on Elementary Schools published in 1867, which, incorporating

⁴⁵⁰ *Register of Subscribers to Ayr Academy* Ayrshire Archives (hereafter A. A.) CO3/10/2/60 a p.1 Despite the title, this volume covers all aspects of the school's management from the period 1794-1837.

evidence from special investigations in the Lowlands, the Hebrides and the city of Glasgow, surveyed the schools against a background of contemporary life and of prevailing attitudes. A Report on Burgh schools, published in two parts in 1868, completed the picture of educational provision below university level.⁴⁵¹

The work of this Commission formed the basis for the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act 'for the education of the whole people of Scotland' which radically altered the management, funding and status of Scottish schools. The two main changes introduced by this Act were the creation of elected School Boards who were to manage the running of schools in their district and the division of the nation's schools into 'elementary' and 'Higher Class Schools'. The creation of School Boards represented the transfer of authority from the Kirk to a new, secular authority.⁴⁵² The creation of a two tier schooling system was in many Scottish eyes highly contentious. The 'Higher Class schools were defined as

burgh schools existing at the passing of the Act, in which the education given does not consist chiefly of elementary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but of instruction in Latin, Greek, modern languages, mathematics, natural science and generally in the higher branches of knowledge.⁴⁵³

This was a distinction unknown in Scotland: it a commonplace for the parish school to teach the '3 Rs' as well as some Latin and Greek:

The English conception of education on a class basis was anathema to the Scots.

Even the term 'elementary school' was alien to them for it limited the range of education and created an unbridgeable gulf between schools and universities.⁴⁵⁴

In Westminster however the Scottish school system was viewed as 'a provincial exotic'⁴⁵⁵

which needed to be brought into line with the English system of elementary schools and

⁴⁵¹ M. Cruickshank 'The Argyll Commission Report 1865-68: A Landmark in Scottish Education' *British Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. XV No 2 June 1967 pp. 133-147. Cruickshank is not slow to make sweeping judgements on the Scots: she refers to 'the carefree fecklessness' of the Highlanders who were 'content to live at subsistence level' (p. 139).

⁴⁵² It has to be said that a familiar figure on most elected Scottish School Boards was the local minister.

⁴⁵³ A. C. Sellar *Manual of the Education Act for Scotland 1872* (Edinburgh, 1872) p. xxxvii

⁴⁵⁴ Cruickshank (1967) p. 135

grammar schools. This controversy between the meritocratic ideal and two-tier approach to the nation's schooling was to continue throughout the rest of the century.

The other significant developments included the introduction of fee-paying, private schools in Scotland; the process began with the founding of Loretto School in 1827 and includes both day schools like Edinburgh Academy (1824) and boarding schools like Fettes College (1870). These new schools modelled themselves on successful English public schools like Shrewsbury or Rugby.⁴⁵⁶ Staffed by products of either Oxford or Cambridge these new schools judged success in terms of how many of their former pupils gained a place at Oxbridge. This being the case, Greek and Latin were of central importance in the school curriculum as the two ancient languages were of prime importance in the English universities' entrance examinations. Yet these schools, with one notable exception, Edinburgh Academy⁴⁵⁷, attracted very few pupils indeed: in 1870 Loretto School, 43 years after its foundation had a total school roll of 39⁴⁵⁸; Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh founded in 1833, had in the period 1855-1858, had a total roll of 102⁴⁵⁹ pupils; Trinity College Glenalmond in its first year, 1847, had 29 pupils and twenty years later had enrolled 22 pupils⁴⁶⁰; St Andrews School for Girls, later named St Leonards, had at its beginning 50 pupils enrolled, eight years later the figure was 97⁴⁶¹; and even Fettes College was concerned about its enrolment figures, so much so that 1887 they approached the Scotch Education Department to ask if they might be allowed to make public an

⁴⁵⁵ The phrase comes from a speech delivered by Lord Moncrieff, the Lord Advocate, in Glasgow in 1886 Marjorie Cruickshank (1967) p. 137 She is mistaken in stating that Moncrieff made four abortive attempts to overhaul Scotland's education system; between 1854 and 1869 he made six attempts to introduce 'reforming' legislation see G. W. T. Ormond *The Lord Advocates of Scotland Second Series 1834-1880* (1914) Chapters IV and VI.

⁴⁵⁶ The Public Schools Act (1868) named nine schools as belonging to this category: Winchester, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Merchant Taylors, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury, St Paul's and Westminster. Winchester and Eton due to the nature of their foundation enjoyed a guaranteed number of places at New College, Oxford (Winchester) and King's College, Cambridge (Eton).

⁴⁵⁷ Edinburgh Academy had 277 enrolled before its opening in October 1824, M. Magnusson *The Clackan and the Slate* (1974) p. 80 but even the Academy faced severe financial problems in 19#847 see Magnusson pp.158-162

⁴⁵⁸ R. J. MacKenzie *Almond of Loretto* (1905) p. 112

⁴⁵⁹ D. Murray *Merchiston Castle School 1855-1858* (Glasgow, 1915 (pp. 53-55)

⁴⁶⁰ *The Glenalmond Register: 1847-1929* pp. 1-3 and pp. 53-55

⁴⁶¹ *St Leonards School 1877-1927* (Oxford) pp. 10 and 14

official inspection report in order to boost numbers.⁴⁶² R. D. Anderson has observed ‘these schools were ... [later] admitted to the Public School community’⁴⁶³, which invites the questions: what is the ‘public school community’ in Scotland?

The final significant development affecting Scottish schooling was the creation, in 1885, of the government post of Secretary for Scotland under whose aegis fell all Scotland’s schools. This department made inspections of schools and its inspectors were responsible for the certification of teachers as competent to teach. It was this department, in 1888, that gave birth to the first national schools examination, the Leaving Certificate. At first enrolment for this examination was restricted to pupils attending Higher Grade Schools which provoked considerable protest within Scotland, the objections to this restriction are best indicated by a letter to the *Glasgow Herald* (January 2nd 1888):

The purpose which pervades the circular [outlining the new examination arrangements] is to put whatever barrier...in the way of pupils in our elementary schools competing with the sons of the wealthy, who attend our higher class schools in entering the professions....Why should nine-tenths of our young people be by law excluded from competing for certificates conferring very valuable privileges simply because their parents have not been able to send them to a higher class school?⁴⁶⁴

This ruling was relaxed in 1893.

The chapter that follows attempts to show how all these changes affected the status of Classics within Scotland’s schools.

Older than Winchester: The ‘Schule at Aire’

The town of Ayr, created a royal burgh in 1205, owed its commercial pre-eminence in medieval times to its geographical location, its large safe harbour meant it was of far

⁴⁶² M Morris *The Suppressed Report: The Fettes College Inspection, 1887* (forthcoming)

⁴⁶³ R. D. Anderson *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland: Schools & Universities* (Oxford, 1983) p. 20

⁴⁶⁴ H.L. Phillip *The Higher Tradition. A History of the Examination in Scottish Schools and how they influenced Secondary Education*. (Dalkeith, 1992) p. 12

greater importance to the Scottish economy than, say, Glasgow. It is impossible to be precise but by the middle of the thirteenth century a grammar school had been established in the town under the control of the church.

In terms of long term future of the school a very significant development was made in 1727 with the appointment of John Mair⁴⁶⁵ as Master to the school to teach navigation, bookkeeping, arithmetic, geography and Greek. Mair is a figure of some significance in the history of Scottish Classics. A graduate of St Andrews, he produced in 1750 an expanded version of Thomas Ruddiman's *Rudiments of Latin Grammar*, this expanded version of the standard grammar of the day found favour in Scottish schools and universities. He was to become Rector at Ayr in 1746 and took over the teaching of the senior Latin class. Some details have survived as to the curriculum at Ayr during Mair's rectorship:

Pupils selected a number of classes and attended only at appropriate times.....Latin was taught from 7-9, 10-12 (9-12 in winter) and 2-4...there were quarterly fees for reading 3/-; writing 2/6; Latin 5/-.⁴⁶⁶

Mair's hope was to create

a sort of academy where almost every sort of the most useful kinds of Literature will be taught and the want of a College education will in great measure be supplied to boys whose parents cannot well afford to maintain them at Universities, Gentlemen in the County will be encouraged to send their children to Ayr, considering that the school will by this means have no rival'.⁴⁶⁷

What gave this campaign enormous impetus was the bequest, in 1791, by John Fergusson of Doonholm to the Royal Burgh of £1,000 for educational purposes. The Prospectus issued in 1794 makes clear the aims of this new academy

⁴⁶⁵ John Mair (1704-1769) was a most industrious author producing editions of Sallust and Caesar's *Gallic Wars* as well as books on arithmetic and bookkeeping.

⁴⁶⁶ J. Strawhorn *750 Years of a Scottish School: Ayr Academy 1233-1983* (Ayr, 1983) p.21.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid p, 28. Interestingly the school advertised for but did not seem to appoint a 'Native of England', as a teacher of 'English Pronunciation' *Ayr Academy and Burgh Schule 1233-1895*. (Ayr, 1895) p. 69

To engage masters of distinguished abilities for teaching Writing, Arithmetic, Book-Keeping, Geography, Algebra, Mathematicks, Navigation, Astronomy, Natural and Experimental Philosophy together with a sketch of Natural History, all which with schools for English, Latin, Greek, French, Drawing and Music to be included in one seminary.⁴⁶⁸

Over £7,000 was raised both by public subscription and by offering, for £50, hereditary directorships in the new Academy. In 1798 a royal charter was granted for the establishment of 'the Academy of Air' and the first session of the new school began, on the premises of the old Grammar School, on August 1st 1796, the new building for this new school was not ready until December 31st 1799.

In 1804 the first *Report of the Committee of the Directors of the Academy of Ayr* described the early years of the school:

If a boy begin to read English at the age of five, he may enter the Grammar School at eight, where he ought to remain at least five years especially if he learn Greek, and if it be meant that he shall follow any profession requiring accurate knowledge of Latin.⁴⁶⁹

The roll in 1799 was 269, rising to 480 five years later. An 1804 list of the quarterly fees has survived the charge for Latin and Greek were set 5 shillings for each subject, but for the more practical subjects such as French or Perspective was 15 shillings per quarter.⁴⁷⁰

A timetable survives from the session beginning August 1799. This indicates that there were six streams: English, Latin, Arithmetic, Writing, French and Classics and it reveals that the Latin class met for five hours per day and the Classics class for three.⁴⁷¹ By 1819 the school roll was 380 of which 105 were girls and 91 were enrolled in the Latin and

⁴⁶⁸ A.A CO 3/10/2/60 A p.1 What is significant here is the attempt to create a synthesis between the traditions of the Grammar School and the commercial imperatives of these new 'academies'.

⁴⁶⁹ *Report* Printed by J. & P. Wilson, Ayr. Copy in Carnegie Library, Ayr. The early pupils were clearly quite boisterous as one of the original Regulations, Number 18, states 'whoever shall make use of any kind of fire arms without leave of his parents....shall be subjected to a penalty of one shilling for each offence.' AA CO3/10/2/60A p. 3.

⁴⁷⁰ *Air Academy and Burgh Schule* (Ayr, 1895) p.143.

⁴⁷¹ A.A CO3/10/2/60 A p. 39 This class was a combination of Latin and English.

Greek classes. Apart from the depredations wrought by the cholera outbreaks in the 1830s, the roll for the rest of the century was not to fall below 400. By the 1840s the school was clearly an important adornment of the Burgh:

The teachers are gentlemen of distinguished talents, they live and act together in great harmony...It [the Academy] has been of great benefit to the town in different ways, it has for instance, by attracting families to reside in it for education, and by translating a spirit of intelligence and enlightened thinking among its inhabitants.⁴⁷²

But the classics master seemed to occupy a very precarious position, for in the Rector's Report for 1838, Dr Memes⁴⁷³ notes:

It is proper to mention...that a very great diminution has taken place within the last five years in the number that receive a classical education and this holds true, not only here but we believe in every part of Scotland.⁴⁷⁴

The class numbers seem to support Dr Memes: in January 1839 from a total Roll of 688, 6 were studying Beginners Greek, 32 Junior Latin and twenty one Senior Latin.⁴⁷⁵

In the nineteenth century, as with nearly all other Scottish schools of any note, the Rector was a classicist. Over a 60 year period Latin and Greek were preserved and encouraged at the Academy by the efforts of three Rectors: William Hunter (1844-1862), James MacDonald (1862-1883) and William Maybin (1883-1910). Hunter produced a series of books including *Symbolica Classica* (1833) and a *Latin Grammar* (1845). Prior to his appointment at Ayr in 1862, James Macdonald, an 'archaeologist and epigraphist of some distinction'⁴⁷⁶ and a graduate of King's College [Aberdeen], had for 13 years been English

⁴⁷² *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (1845) Vol. 5 p. 71.

⁴⁷³ A product of King's College, Aberdeen.

⁴⁷⁴ CO3/10/2/60A.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid* pp.302-303.

⁴⁷⁶ James Russell, *Dictionary of British Classicists* (2004) Vol. 2 p. 606. His son George was to work as Gilbert Murray's assistant at Glasgow and to have a distinguished career both as a numismatist and as the author of *The Roman Wall in Scotland* (1911), still a standard text on the subject. His major role in public affairs was in secondary education where, together with his school friend from Ayr Academy J W MacKail, he helped preserve the position of Latin in the Scottish school curriculum during the inter-war years. George dedicated his magnum opus, *The Roman Wall in Scotland* (Glasgow, 1911), to his father 'D.M.S. Patri

Master at Elgin Academy. As the new Rector he immediately overhauled the timetables; he split the school into a Preparatory, aged 6 to 10, and a Higher School where all pupils took Latin, after 2 years of Latin pupils could opt for either the Classical Section with Greek or the Modern Section bookkeeping, drawing science with the option to drop Latin.

Macdonald's dedication to the Classics is indicated by one extreme case: in 1874 he taught an advanced Greek class for a single, 15 year old pupil,

I myself was the first pupil to whom the curriculum was extended as far as the requirements of a secondary school demand. That was in my last year at school. Since then, the course of teaching which only seven years ago was extended with difficulty and rather daringly to a single pupil has become the regular Academy course....the education given here is now equal to that of any secondary school in Scotland; one might also add superior to any outside of our two capital towns.⁴⁷⁷

The sole pupil was to become one of the most noted of Scottish classicists, J. W. Mackail. Macdonald was not alone in this sort of act on behalf of Latin and Greek: his successor, a Belfast man, William Maybin (1883-1910) heard in 1884 of a very bright 15 year old, George Douglas Brown, who had just left the Parish School in the nearby village of Colyton. Brown, the illegitimate son of an Irish dairymaid, had been forced by poverty to quit his schooling in 1881, aged 12, but he had in the interim, between farm work, been privately tutored by several local worthies. Maybin was very curious, interviewed Brown and enrolled him at the Academy in 1883. One version of events has Maybin reducing the school fee from seven guineas to a pound, but it is more likely he waived the fees, the Irish connection and Brown's ability in Latin winning the day. Such was Brown's progress at the Academy that he entered Glasgow University in October 1887 and by passing the

Optimo Caledoniae Romanae Indagatori. Studiosissimo Pro Pietate Filius. ' ['To the sacred spirits of the departed To the best of fathers and explorers of Roman Scotland, on behalf of a pious and most studious son']. Both father and son were awarded the title Doctor of Laws.

⁴⁷⁷ *Glasgow Herald*, September 1st 1880. After Ayr, Mackail attended the University of Edinburgh and then went to Balliol where he won the Hertford, Ireland, Derby and Craven scholarships as well as the Newdigate.

Preliminary Examination gained exemption from the Junior Latin and Greek classes. Here he came under the influence of Jebb but much more importantly the young Gilbert Murray, the professor was only three years older than his charge. The two men became friends, the student acted as Murray's assistant for a period and Brown was invited to Castle Howard, a long way from the milking parlours of Ochiltree and Colyton. Murray admired Brown's energy but felt he was not cut out to be a teacher:

He of course did his teaching work well but one felt that he was not cut out for anything in the shape of a schoolmaster. The clock-like regularity that comes naturally to some men, and is so necessary in the teaching of a Scotch University, was a matter of considerable effort to him.⁴⁷⁸

In 1891, clearly with Murray's tuition, he won the Snell Exhibition, worth £130 a year, and entered Balliol. After Oxford he made a living as a writer and journalist, producing in 1901, the year before his death, his masterpiece, *The House with the Green Shutters*.⁴⁷⁹ At least one critic has traced a classical source, Sophocles' *Ajax*, particularly Greek tragedy at work in this novel.⁴⁸⁰ Brown was very clear about his debt to Ayr Academy, 'To it I owe everything that I am';⁴⁸¹ his novel carries the simple dedication, 'To William Maybin.'⁴⁸² To see Macdonald or Maybin as Scottish equivalents to Dr Arnold of Rugby or Benjamin Kennedy at Shrewsbury, ruling their institutions with a classical rod of iron, would be a gross misreading of the situation. The Rector in the burgh school was very much under the control of the Board of Directors and was additionally amongst his teaching colleague not even *primus inter pares*. The two government investigations of the 1860s are in complete agreement on the circumscribed nature of the Rector's powers at Ayr:

⁴⁷⁸ C Lennox *George Douglas Brown* (1903) p.78.

⁴⁷⁹ Here, the archetypal 'lad a' paitrs' wrote the novel that above all others, savages the often cosy sentimentality of the 'Kailyard School.'

⁴⁸⁰ Iain Crichton Smith 'The House with the Green Shutters', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, Vol. 7 1969-1970 pp.3-10.

⁴⁸¹ Lennox p. 51

⁴⁸² Brown's school notebooks still survive at the Carnegie Library in Ayr with Maybin's annotations but they contain only his work for the English class.

The authority of the rector can hardly be said to extend beyond the classes under his immediate superintendence. He is consulted by the directors in all matters of importance; but his influence depends very much on personal relations subsisting between them and him on the one hand and his colleagues and him on the other.⁴⁸³

It is possible to uncover what Macdonald's weekly teaching load was like, at least for one period, February 1872. The Classics and English Department had four assistants, two of these to teach English only and two teaching Latin and Greek: Mr Craigie and Mr Cameron. The teaching day began at 9 am and was divided into six hourly classes; Macdonald's daily timetable was: VI *Latin* (8), VII *English* (34), IX *English* (36) VIII & IX *English* (18), III *Latin* (14) and III *Greek* (6).⁴⁸⁴ The remarkable achievement here is that, in a school that was fee paying and the curriculum optional, both Macdonald and Maybin managed to allow the classics, if not to flourish, at least to survive.

On June 25th 1866, the English Inspector of Schools D. R. Fearon visited Ayr Academy to make a three day inspection of the teaching in the school; this was to form part of a Report for the Schools Inquiry Commission, published in 1868, dealing with, 'Burgh Schools in Scotland and Secondary Education in Foreign Countries'.⁴⁸⁵ Fearon's work in Scottish schools is of interest as he goes to great pains to understand the differences in the Scottish system and he uses the methods he had used previously in inspecting in England and Wales to draw out these differences.⁴⁸⁶ In each of the nine Burgh Schools he visited he adopted the same checklist approach: history of the school, curriculum, costs, quality of teaching and effects of the teaching, the last measured by an examination of the pupils.⁴⁸⁷

The classical curriculum at Ayr was as follows:

⁴⁸³ T. Harvey and A. C. Sellar *Education Committee (Scotland) Report on the State of Education in the Burgh and Middle Class Schools of Scotland Vol. II: Special Reports* (1868) p.264.

⁴⁸⁴ A. A. CO3/10/2/60 *Ayr Academy Standing Committee Minute Book 1838-1873*.

⁴⁸⁵ The volume in question is more noted for a report by another HMI, Matthew Arnold, *Report on the System of Education for the Middle and Upper Classes in France, Italy, Germany and Switzerland*.

⁴⁸⁶ He had inspected in London, Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Herefordshire and had produced a *General Report on Secondary Education in the Postal Districts of London*. (1868) p. 5.

⁴⁸⁷ The other schools visited were Glasgow High School, Edinburgh High School, Aberdeen Grammar School, Perth Academy, Dumfries Academy, Stirling High School, Inverness Academy and Hamilton Academy.

Fifth Year Dr W. Smith's *Principia Latina* Part 1;

Sixth Year *Principia* Part 2;

Seventh Year Caesar, Ovid and Latin Prose Composition;

Eight Year Sallust, Virgil, Arnold's *Prose* Part 1 and also Greek Grammar and Xenophon;

Ninth and Tenth Year Livy or Cicero and Horace plus 'Composition in Prose and Verse, History, Antiquities etc.' and in Greek New Testament, Homer, Herodotus and Sophocles.

Fearon:

heard the teaching of the first, second and fifth year in Latin....They showed much thought and real hard work and more taste than I would have expected. I was surprised that they seemed to work so much *con amore*, as if they were giving their hearts to it...The contrast with the English boys, sitting mechanically round a classroom, all their best energies given to cricket and nothing but the dregs for the teacher, was most striking.

Macdonald was one of a select group of leading Scottish Rectors to give evidence to the Argyll Commission.⁴⁸⁸ He was asked general questions about the burgh school system in Scotland but he was very clear on two particular issues: the curriculum and examinations. Macdonald believed that

a prescribed course of study should be made obligatory...[with] the usual elementary subjects: English language and literature, French, classics, mathematics, drawing, and the elements of one or more branches of natural history, or of physical science.

He also agreed that the adoption of an independent, annual system of examination which would be conducted by examiners

⁴⁸⁸ The others being James Donaldson (Royal High School, Edinburgh), Rev. J. Hannah (Glenalmond) J. Hodson (Edinburgh Academy) and J. Ross (Arbroath). Added to their testimony was evidence from Professors Blackie, Sellar, Lewis Campbell, Shairp, Geddes and Ramsay - all classicists.

at least two in number, and if the appointments are not to be permanent they might be made, the one for two the other for three years, so that there would always be one examiner acquainted with the various schools to be visited by himself and his colleague.⁴⁸⁹

In 1883 Macdonald left Ayr to take over the Rectorship of Kelvinside Academy the newly established school in Glasgow.⁴⁹⁰ Those applying for the Ayr vacancy, advertised in the *Glasgow Herald*, *Educational News* and *Athenaeum*, were told that the:

school sought a Rector and Classical Master...salary about £500 per annum and may be considerably increased by the keeping of Boarders in which the rector will receive every encouragement from the School Board.⁴⁹¹

During Maybin's tenure the most significant development was the introduction, in 1887, of the Leaving Certificate a group certificate taken by those who had completed five years of secondary education.⁴⁹² In the 1890s according to Maybin's figures in his annual report to the School Board the Ayr pupils out performed any other school. Thus for example in 1889 the Academy entered more for the Certificate than any other school: 190 as opposed to the national average of 159.9, achieved a greater number of Honours passes than the national rate 188: 8.4 and achieved more group passes than other schools 176: 120.9.⁴⁹³ As can be seen from Table 6 (b) the Academy could hold its own in examinations in Latin and Greek with the private schools but with a significantly smaller number of entrants.

The National Picture: Scotland's Burgh Schools

Ayr Academy has been dealt with at length in order to show the challenges one particular school, outside the major Scottish population centres, had to meet in the period in question, but it is necessary to set this school's history against the wider national context. The *Reports* of the Argyll Commission allows the creation of a map of Scotland's burgh

⁴⁸⁹ *Education Commission (Scotland) Third Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into Schools in Scotland: Burgh and Middle-Class Schools*. (1868) pp. 212-213.

⁴⁹⁰ Opened on September 2nd 1878.

⁴⁹¹ A. A. CO3/10/2/63 *Ayr Academy Minute Book* pp.454-456.

⁴⁹² This qualification was to survive until 1939, replaced by the Senior Leaving Certificate.

⁴⁹³ AA CO3/10/2/64 May 1889.

schools in the 1860s. The admittedly incomplete⁴⁹⁴ statistics concerning the classics, in Table 6 (a), presented by the Argyll Commissioners reveal: a nation-wide teaching of the two ancient languages, from Orkney to the Borders, the parlous position of Greek but above all the pre-eminence of Scotland's two major cities: Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Commissioners made two other relevant general comments:

As 71% of the teachers in Middle-class schools in Scotland have had university training, it is obvious that the influence of the Scottish Universities is very considerable; but only 36% are graduates from any University, the special qualification conferred by a degree is not in such universal demand as would seem to be desirable.

They also note a key difference between these Scottish burgh schools and England:

Boys at Scottish schools work nearly twice as many hours each year as boys at the three principal English schools. The hours appear to be too long in the Scottish schools: nine hours a day, five days a week, is about the average.⁴⁹⁵

Their general conclusion was that the Scots have as much an appetite for education as anywhere in Europe and certainly more so than England:

It does not seem extravagant to conclude that the people of Scotland are not less disposed than the people of Prussia, or of France, and more disposed than the people of England, to avail themselves of any educational opportunities which may be placed within their reach.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁴ 28 schools made no return, so much for the majesty of Parliament.

⁴⁹⁵ *Education Commission (Scotland) Third Report* (1868) p. xiii

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid* p. ix.

Table 4 Scottish Burgh Schools and the Classics 1866-1867 ⁴⁹⁷

Name of School/Date of Foundation	Total studying Latin	Total studying Greek
Tain Academy (1812) ⁴⁹⁸	8	4
Forres Academy (c.1600s)	34	4
Elgin Academy (1800)	40	2
Milne's Institution, Fochabers (1846)	24	16
Banff Academy (1544)	38	12
Aberdeen Old Grammar School ('from time immemorial') ⁴⁹⁹	22	10
Montrose Academy (1329) ⁵⁰⁰	61	2
Forfar Burgh High School (1789)	46	Nil
Brechin Burgh School	35	2
Arbroath High School ('of a very old date')	56	2
Dundee High School (1200s?)	110	17
Madras College, St Andrews (1714/1831) ⁵⁰¹	Only a gross total given for both languages :140	
Madras Academy, Cupar 1581/1831 ⁵⁰²	33	2
Kirkcaldy Burgh School (pre 1582) ⁵⁰³	20	3

⁴⁹⁷ These figures are abstracted from *Report of the State of Education in the Burgh and Middle-Class Schools in Scotland Vol. II Special Reports* (1868) which contains the inspection reports on the 53 schools inspected.

⁴⁹⁸ The Commissioners worked geographically rather than alphabetically, beginning in North-East Scotland and making an anti-clockwise progress through Scotland.

⁴⁹⁹ The Commissioners words.

⁵⁰⁰ This is the school where there is the first recorded instance of Greek being taught in a Scottish school. A Scots merchant John Erskine of Dun brought to Montrose a French teacher 'skilled in the Greek tongue.'

⁵⁰¹ The first date is the foundation, the second refers to the when the bequest of £50,000 by Andrew Bell a son of St Andrews and inventor of the Madras system of teaching, became effective and led to the name change.

⁵⁰² Again school a beneficiary of Andrew Bell. School now called Bell Baxter Academy.

⁵⁰³ This refers to the earliest documented date but there is strong circumstantial evidence that an earlier date is more correct.

Dunfermline Burgh School (1173?)	9	Nil
Burntisland Burgh School (1173?)	3	Nil
Dollar Institution (1818)	63	12
Lanark Burgh School (pre 1557)	+22 ⁵⁰⁴	2
Linlithgow Burgh School (1629, 'a place of great antiquity')	7	Nil
Renfrew Burgh School (c 1396)	13	Nil
Leith High School ('very early')	14	Nil
Dumbarton Academy (pre 1486)	14	1
Musselburgh Grammar School (pre 1609)	14	Taught, but no figure given
Port Glasgow Burgh School	2	Nil
Haddington Burgh School ('very ancient')	Taught, but no figure given	Nil
Killmarnock Academy (1727)	16	3
Peebles Grammar School (c 1608)	10	Nil
North Berwick School (1830)	'a small class'	Nil
Rothsay Parochial School	6	nil
Selkirk Burgh School (pre 1792)	Taught, but no figure given	Taught, but no figure given
Campeltown Burgh School (1600s)	11	Nil
Dunbar Burgh School (pre 1564)	Taught, but no figure given	Nil
Falkirk Grammar School (pre 1560)	8	8 ⁵⁰⁵
Airdrie Academy (1850)	33	3
Paisley Grammar School (1576)	20	4
Greenock Academy (1741)	86	20

⁵⁰⁴ No figure given for Junior Latin class.

⁵⁰⁵ Uniquely in this school, the Greek class was offered free to encourage the language.

Kirkcudbright Academy (1576/1815)	42	9
Ewart Institute, Newton Stewart (1864)	21	18
Dumfries Academy (1600s/1802)	71	13
Edinburgh Academy (1824)	143	143
Edinburgh High School (pre 1378)	376	79
Stirling High School (1700s)	74	12
Perth Academy (1173/1760)	64	13
Trinity College, Glenalmond (1847)	94	94
Hamilton Academy (pre 1714)	26	4
Ayr Academy (1264) ⁵⁰⁶	137	12
Irvine Academy (1562/1818)	33	6
Aberdeen Grammar School (pre 1262) ⁵⁰⁷	39	34
Inverness Academy (1793)	70	23
Kirkwall Grammar School, Orkney (pre 1400)	Taught, but no figure given. Roll 89	Taught, but no figure given
Glasgow High School (1300s)	271 ⁵⁰⁸	271
Total	+2274	+766
Total School Population 16,000⁵⁰⁹	14%	4%

⁵⁰⁶ This figure is disputed, the school's history claims that the first master of the 'Schule of Air', Allan, was appointed in 1233, J. Strawhorn p. 110. Perhaps some other early medieval dates given could be challenged.

⁵⁰⁷ Here the Commissioners found the best Latinists in Scotland but they were also the rowdiest students in the land.

⁵⁰⁸ This is the total number of pupil in the Classics Department where all studied both languages.

⁵⁰⁹ The Commission calculated on the basis of their returns, not complete, a pupil population of 15,946 Third Report p. viii.

The Capital's School: The Royal High School of Edinburgh

‘For long periods in the eighteenth century it [the Royal High School of Edinburgh]⁵¹⁰ was pre-eminent in Scotland’, this is the judgement of Alexander Law author of the standard text on education in eighteenth century Edinburgh.⁵¹¹ The Victorian historian of the school, William Steven, is even more categorical, ‘this school was the ‘national school of Scotland’.⁵¹² Certainly the High School enjoyed certain, distinct advantages over other Scottish seminaries: its metropolitan location, the antiquity of the institution, and the fact that the Corporation of Edinburgh managed not just this school but the University of Edinburgh meant that there were close if not always harmonious relations between these three august bodies.⁵¹³

The revival in Edinburgh's fortunes was made most dramatically manifest, to all, by the development of the New Town from the 1780s onwards. Another factor which benefited the High School was the fact that the Scottish nobility and landed gentry spent a part of the year in the capital and thus sent their sons to this famous day school. But there was one factor above all others that made the school a leading centre for classical studies, the succession of distinguished classicists who were appointed to the Rectorship: Alexander Adam (1768-1809), James Pillans (1809-1820), Aglionby Carson (1820-1845) Leonhard Schmitz (1845-1866) and James Donaldson (1866-1872); for over a century these men reformed the curriculum at the school, changed the pedagogical practices of the institution and in three cases made, by their publications, a notable contribution to Latin and Greek studies.⁵¹⁴ By the time of Pillans' tenure ‘the school roll revealed boys from Russia, Germany, Switzerland, the United States, Barbados, St Vincent, Demerara, the East Indies,

⁵¹⁰ It seems impossible to confirm when the royal appellation was conferred neither the school nor the Court of Lord Lyon, supreme in all matters heraldic in Scotland, can give a precise date. It seems to appear first, as a title, in the 1590s.

⁵¹¹ *Education in Edinburgh in the Eighteenth Century* (1965) p.59.

⁵¹² W. Steven *History of the High School of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1849) p. 195 Steven was a former pupil of the school.

⁵¹³ The physical location of the school from 1777, in Infirmary Street, meant it was a few yards from the university. The major clash occurred during Schmitz reign, the 1850 ‘Battle of the Grammars.’

⁵¹⁴ The exception, Pillans, made a number of significant contributions to educational practice.

besides England and Ireland in attendance'.⁵¹⁵ But the revival in the fortunes of the 'tounis scule' school began with Adam's rectorship.

Alexander Adam, the son of a small tenant farmer in Rafford, Morayshire in the north east of Scotland, was born in 1741. He attended the local parochial school where the schoolmaster, George Fiddes, encouraged his studies in Latin, so much so that he 'had read the whole of Livy before he was sixteen, chiefly in the early morning by the light of splinters of bogwood.'⁵¹⁶ He managed to obtain a place at the University of Edinburgh, like his exact contemporary Andrew Dalzel, through a family clerical connection.⁵¹⁷ Thus it was that in November 1757 Adam set out to walk the 160 miles to Edinburgh to begin his university studies. Adam secured a teaching post at George Watson's Hospital in 1760 due mainly to the good offices of his clerical patron Rev James Watson. In 1763 Adam left George Watson's and became tutor to the son of Alexander Kincaid, then His Majesty's Printer for Scotland and afterwards, in 1776, Lord Provost of Edinburgh. In the following year it seems Adam took a temporary post, as a 'supply teacher', at the High School, but more significantly in 1765 he assumed the teaching duties of the ailing Rector, Alexander Mathieson. The enfeebled Rector retained his salary but went into almost complete retirement on the May 31st 1768 and the following day the Corporation:

Did remit to the following gentlemen to wit Professor Hamilton, the Reverend Dr Dick, Dr MaQueen, Dr Erskine, Dr Cumming Dr Gregory and Professors George Stewart and Hunter⁵¹⁸ or any three of them to take trial of the fitness and qualifications of Mr Alexander Adam and they to report to the Council next Council Day his fitness or unfitness for being Rector of the High School.⁵¹⁹

As the most recent historian of the school has observed:

⁵¹⁵ J. Murray *A History of the Royal High School* (Edinburgh, 1997) p. 42.

⁵¹⁶ *Dictionary of National Biography* Vol. 1 (1908) The entry is written by Pillans.

⁵¹⁷ The Minister of the Canongate Kirk, one of Edinburgh's most fashionable congregations, Rev. James Watson was a cousin of Adam's father. The Minister of Rafford, Rev Duncan Shaw also supported his cause

⁵¹⁸ Hunter was Professor of Greek and Stewart of Humanity.

⁵¹⁹ *Minutes of the Town Council of Edinburgh* Vol. 84 p. 102.

The nominating interviewing panel thus included not only University representatives to assess his classical competence, but also included so prominent a church figure as the Reverend Patrick Cumming, the ecclesiastical agent for Archibald Campbell, third Duke of Argyll whose interest in the putative rector of the capital's pre-eminent school may have embraced pedagogic, spiritual and political qualities of the candidate.⁵²⁰

Adam's 'trial' lasted for five hours and the passages Professor Stewart selected for exegesis were the 18th Chapter of the Second Book of Livy and the 6th Ode of the Fourth Book of Horace.⁵²¹ In June 1768 the appointment was confirmed,⁵²² but prior to taking up his Rectorial duties Adam, with the Council's blessing, embarked on a 56 day tour of the best schools in England and Europe to observe best practice in teaching the classics. Included in this itinerary were Westminster School and seminaries in Leyden, Ghent, Brussels and Paris.⁵²³

Adam's first senior class in 1768 numbered 48 boys, but his classes were soon to grow dramatically in numbers, for example his 1786 class contained 143 boys. His classes rarely fell below 100 and in total he taught somewhere in the region of 4,000 boys in his 40 year career as Rector. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the changes in teaching methods he sought to introduce is to compare the 'traditional' teaching style of the High School with an eyewitness account of Adam at work. Luke Fraser was a classical master at the High School from 1766 until his retirement in 1805 and one of his pupils, George Combe,⁵²⁴ has left this description of his Humanity class in 1787, when he was aged nine:

In the morning he began at the top of the class consisting of about a hundred boys, and heard them repeat the portion of grammar or other subject given out to be

⁵²⁰ A. J. Murray *The Influence of Doctor Alexander Adam, Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, upon Education, Culture and Political Opinion in Scotland and the United Kingdom during the Enlightenment*. PhD thesis, Open University (1991) p. 39.

⁵²¹ Steven p.114.

⁵²² Strictly speaking he was appointed in 1768 as joint-Rector with Mathieson 'with the survivency to the longest liver of them.' *Minutes of the Town Council of Edinburgh* vol. 84 pp. 109-111. Adam became sole Rector early in 1771.

⁵²³ Murray's thesis reprints as an appendix Adam's notebook on this tour.

⁵²⁴ Combe (1788-1858) was a pupil at the school from the age of nine until he was fourteen.

learned by heart. As we were not asked a word about the meaning of anything, the learning of this lesson was a mere act of memory, and I made myself master of it.⁵²⁵

It was this empty, rote learning that Adam sought to reform: he observed ‘the hurtful effects of teaching boys Latin rules which they could not understand’.⁵²⁶ Benjamin Mackay who was to become a master at the High School (1820-1848) observed Adam in action in his class towards the end of his long career in 1803:

The class appeared very numerous (120 boys) and in the finest order. The doctor was calling up pupils from all parts of it, taking sometimes the head, sometimes the foot of the forms; sometimes he examined the class downwards from the head to the foot, sometimes upwards from foot to head. The boys construed and answered with extraordinary readiness and precision, illustrating every allusion to Roman or Grecian history, antiquities, geography, mythology etc.⁵²⁷

But Adam’s enthusiasm and belief in the *vita activa* could not extend beyond the walls of the Rector’s classroom, due the relative powerlessness of the post.

Adam however wished to do more than reform the teaching of Latin in his senior class; he wanted to reform the teaching and learning of Latin in eighteenth century Scotland, and to this end ‘tried to compile a new grammar’.⁵²⁸ The book in question, *Principles of Latin and English Grammar*, was published in 1772 and as the title suggests was attempting to make clear the parallels and differences in grammatical terms between the two languages. This project received support from two important members of the Edinburgh literati, Principal Adam Ferguson of Edinburgh University and the Rev. Hugh Blair, Professor of Rhetoric, at the same institution, but it also made enemies in almost every quarter of Edinburgh public life. The other masters at the High School rejected both the book and Adam’s right

⁵²⁵ Quoted by Murray (1997) p.33.

⁵²⁶ Steven p. 116. It was not just Latin that suffered from this approach; complaints were often voiced after the annual Presbytery inspection of parish schools that the pupils knew by heart the Shorter Catechism but were often at a loss to explain what it meant. One inspector who asked a boy in a Hebridean school who was John Knox was told ‘He was a Christian martyr who was crucified’. *Education Commission (Scotland): Report on the State of Education in the Hebrides* (1866) p.112.

⁵²⁷ Murray (1997) p. 34.

⁵²⁸ Steven (1849) p. 116.

to use the book in the school; one master, William Nicol, physically attacked the Rector over this issue and was dismissed from his post.⁵²⁹ The University and the Corporation both proscribed the book insisting that Ruddiman's grammar book remain the set text. Adam was even threatened with dismissal, if he persisted in his use of the book in defiance of the school's managers. Indeed at one point the Corporation were about to refer the matter to Scotland's highest law officer, the Lord Advocate.⁵³⁰ This bitter public quarrel lasted for 14 years and throughout that time Adam persisted in using this unauthorised text with remarkable results. The violence of the quarrel stemmed from many possible causes: the right Adam felt he had as Rector to set the textbook to be used, the fact that Adam's book was very different from the standard textbook most Scottish schools used, Thomas Ruddiman's *Rudiments of the Latin Tongue* (1714) and, linked to this last issue, the desire of Ruddiman's heirs, Walter and Thomas, to retain, as printers and publishers, their lucrative monopoly. Yet at the heart of the controversy was Adam's challenge to the orthodox view, that English grammar could only be understood by knowing Latin first:

Whatever we learn first, is the most familiar to us. For this reason, children will most easily apprehend the Principles of Grammar, when explained and exemplified in that language, which is natural to them...Till of late very little attention hath been given to the study of English Grammar...the study of both grammars (Latin and English) seems necessary, and the knowledge of the one will be found conducive to that of the other...In order, therefore, to teach the Latin Grammar with success, we should always join with it a particular attention to English...This is the design of the following attempt.⁵³¹

⁵²⁹ In 1795 his quarrel with Nicol made him the enemy of Scotland's national bard, a drinking companion of Nicol's, 'that puritanic, rotten-hearted, hell commissioned scoundrel Adam' *Letters of Robert Burns* ed. J. de L. Ferguson (1931) Vol. 1 pp.281-282.quoted by Murray (1997) p. 98.

⁵³⁰ Minutes of the Town council Vol. 109 December 20th 1786 pp. 2-4.

⁵³¹ A. Adam *Principles of Latin and English Grammar* (1772) Preface. The debate over what was the ideal Latin grammar for use in British school s was to continue for another 100 years. Even the publication of what was to become the definitive text book, Benjamin Kennedy's *Public School Latin Primer*, in 1866, was attended by controversy. See C. Stray *Grinders and Grammars* (Reading, 1995)

Outside of Edinburgh, Adam's *Principles* received a warm reception, both in England and North America. Adam's second major publication, *Roman Antiquities*, was published in 1791 and not attended by any hostilities; indeed it was warmly welcomed both in Britain and Europe. Adam's holistic intention was to present his pupils in the High School with a review of 'the institutions and laws, the religion, the manners and customs of the Romans'.⁵³² This book was translated into German, French and Italian and went through six English editions before the author's death in 1809. In America this book went through seven editions between 1807 and 1887. Adam's book 'became the most successful English language book on the subject' and secured his reputation as a classical scholar.⁵³³

Adam's successor as Rector was a former pupil of the High School, James Pillans, who in his period at the High School he refined the monitorial system, a lifelong interest, and introduced Latin and Greek verse composition. In 1820 Pillans was appointed to the Chair of Humanity at Edinburgh, in succession to Alexander Christison.⁵³⁴ Pillans was succeeded by Aglionby Carson who supervised the removal, in 1829, of the school from the Old Town to the magnificent neo-classical building, designed by Thomas Hamilton,⁵³⁵ on Calton Hill. Carson retired in 1845 and his successor was Leonhard Schmitz; during his time the Rector was in charge of both a Fifth and a Sixth Year Class. James Donaldson became Rector in 1866 and in his most advanced class taught Lucretius, Tacitus, Thucydides, Plato and the Greek tragedians.⁵³⁶

The Growth of Private Education: Edinburgh Academy

In the 1868 there was no doubt in the minds of those working for the Argyll Commission which Scottish school held the blue riband it was Edinburgh Academy: 'The list of honours gained by former pupils within the last five years is the greatest of any school in

⁵³² A. Adam *Roman Antiquities* Preface (1791).

⁵³³ Murray (1997) p. 87. The book even won praise, in 1792, from John Lempriere.

⁵³⁴ Formerly a Master at Edinburgh High School. This transition from classical schoolmaster to Professor ended, I think, in 1962 with Nicholas Hammond's translation from the headmastership at Clifton College to the chair of Greek at the University of Bristol.

⁵³⁵ A former pupil and student of Scotland's greatest architect, Robert Adam. The building is modelled on the Temple of Theseus in Athens.

⁵³⁶ *Education Commission (Scotland) Report on the State of Education in Burgh and Middle Class Schools in Scotland, Vol. II :Special Reports* (1868) p.209.

Scotland'.⁵³⁷ The Commissioners' judgement was based on the school's success in preparing pupils for Oxbridge or for the entrance examinations to the Indian Civil Service. The ostensible reason for the establishment of this new school, founded in 1824, is given, in Latin, on the foundation stone:

UT NUMERO PARENTUM in urbe Edinburgo in dies crescenti est ampliore
quam qui suppetebat locum UBI AETAS PUERILIS ad humanitatem informari
posset jamdiu efflagitanti consuleretur HANC AEDEM docilii juventae sacratam
quidam cives pecunia collata exstruendam curaverunt et primum lapidem posuerunt
Pri. Kal. Jul. MDCCCXXIII⁵³⁸ [To meet the needs of the ever growing number of
parents in the city of Edinburgh who have long been clamouring for an ampler
place than was previously available, where the rising generation could receive a
liberal education, certain citizens, having contributed the necessary money, made
arrangements for the construction of this building dedicated to the teaching of the
young, and laid the Foundation Stone on the 30th June 1823.]

The circumstances surrounding the creation of this school are a little more complex than this lapidary statement suggests. There was in Edinburgh by 1820 considerable disquiet in some circles about the state of educational provision in the capital: classes at the High School were vast (257 in the Rector's Class in 1823);⁵³⁹ the monitorial system in its most mechanical form was the preferred means of instruction; standards in Classics, especially in Greek, seemed not to be improving. Scotland seemed unable to match or even compete with the products of the leading English public schools.

Situated in the New Town, the Academy was to be funded by a share offer, £50 per share; within two months nearly £9,000 had been raised. The directors of the project included the leading political and literary figures of Scottish life: Lord Melville was the Chairman, and

⁵³⁷ *Report of the State of Education in the Burgh and Middle-Class Schools in Scotland, Vol. II :Special Reports* p. 194.

⁵³⁸ M Magnusson's *The Clackenn and the Slate* (1974) p. 60. It is unfortunate in the extreme that this history of the school, written it seems with official approval and with full access to the school's records, contains hardly any bibliographic or archival details as to the sources consulted.

⁵³⁹ Lord Cockburn *Memorials of My Time* (1856) p 235.

his fellow directors included Sir Walter Scott and two pillars of the *Edinburgh Review*, Leonard Horner and Henry Cockburn.⁵⁴⁰ The school was clearly attempting to imitate many of the features of the leading English public schools. The first objective of the new school's curriculum, as set out in the 'Statement of the Directors of Edinburgh Academy' was 'The alterations upon the present system of instruction at the High School which we propose to introduce are these: A more extended instruction in Greek by all the Masters'.⁵⁴¹ Class sizes were to be controlled: 'We propose that the number in each of the four junior Classes shall not exceed 110 and that the Rector's Class shall not exceed 160.'⁵⁴² Most controversial of all was the proposal to appoint a teacher of (English) elocution, a post unknown in Scottish education until this date:

The alterations upon the present system of instruction in the High School which we propose to introduce are ... In addition to the four Under Masters, a Master for English, who shall have a pure English accent: the mere circumstance of his being born within the boundary of England, not to be considered indispensable. The object of this appointment is to endeavour to remedy a defect in the education of the boys of Edinburgh, who are suffered to neglect the cultivation of their native language and literature, during the whole time that they attend the Grammar Schools. It will be the duty of this Master, to give instruction in Reading, Elocution and modern History.⁵⁴³

This development would have raised a few hackles in the capital where distinguished members of the Scottish bench like Lords Auchinleck, Braxfield and Inglis were proud of, and eloquent in, 'the Scottish tongue'.⁵⁴⁴ Interestingly, on a separate, but related, issue the managers of the new school gave ground:

⁵⁴⁰ The cost of the Academy building was £13,000 compared with the bill for new High School, on Calton Hill, which was £24,000.

⁵⁴¹ *Statement by the Directors of Edinburgh Academy* (1834) p. 10. National Library of Scotland ABS 2.97 34/4.

⁵⁴² *Ibid* p.22.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid* p. 10-11.

⁵⁴⁴ A former pupil of Edinburgh High School, George Borrow, recalled his father's worries about his son's possible enrolment at that seminary, 'I [Borrow's father] lost no opportunity of making inquiries about these

It is intended that Latin shall be taught according to the accustomed mode of pronouncing that language in Scotland; and that this shall be the acknowledged system of the School; but the Boys are also, in the latter years, to be made as familiar as is practicable with the English mode of pronunciation.⁵⁴⁵

The first Rector of the Academy was the Reverend John Williams, a Welsh cleric, classicist graduate of Balliol whom Sir Walter Scott described as ‘one of the most learned scholars’.⁵⁴⁶ Williams was not afraid to tackle this sensitive issue of ‘correct’ diction head-on; some of his Balliol hauteur is conveyed by the following communication to his employers, the Directors:

If there was once a close resemblance between vowel sounds of the standard vernacular language of Scotland and those adopted in pronouncing Latin, Time has entirely destroyed it...The language of the English Court has become the standard language of Scotland, and the Scottish has disappeared in her own higher circles. All classes seem desirous that their children, at least, read with a pure English accent. In the meantime, the Latin pronunciation has remained unmodified, and still retains those sounds which, however familiar from infancy to the courtiers of James the Sixth of Scotland, can only be acquired by study by the great body of George the Fourth’s British subjects...a peculiar fastidiousness of ear has been a distinguishing mark of high mental culture in all ages, and false argument has often been pardoned where false pronunciation has proved fatal.⁵⁴⁷

Not all in Scotland were convinced by arguments such as these, especially in the legal profession: for example, the distinguished advocate Henry Erskine (1746-1817) was once pleading before a learned senator when,

people the Scotch, amongst whom we now are...From what I have heard and seen I should say that upon the whole ...they seem acute and intelligent, and I am told their system of education is so excellent, that every person is learned-more or less acquainted with Greek and Latin. There is one thing connected with them, which is a great drawback-the horrid way in which they speak....I wish sincerely our Parliament, which is passing so many foolish acts every year, would pass one to force the these Scotch to speak English’.

Lavengro (London, 1851) Chapter VII 45-46. The year in question is 1813 when Borrow was ten years old.

⁵⁴⁵ *Statement* (1834)p. 16.

⁵⁴⁶ Lockhart J.G. *The Life of Sir Walter Scott. New Popular Edition* (1893) p.526. See footnote 243 p. 84.

⁵⁴⁷ Magnusson pp.117-118. No source or date given.

he spoke of *curator bonis*.

‘Allow me to correct you,’ said his Lordship, ‘the word is *curaator*.’

‘Thank you, my Lord said Erskine. ‘I doubt not your Lordship is right, since you are so learned a *senaator*, and so eloquent an *oraator*.’⁵⁴⁸

The school opened its doors on October 1st 1824, and after a speech by Sir Walter Scott, the pupils entered the seminary, passing through the portico where there were

Bold inscriptions in Latin and Greek...the first [announcing] that the Edinburgh Academy was dedicated to the studies of youth in 1824, the second that Education is the Mother of Wisdom and Virtue.⁵⁴⁹

The initial classical timetable set was a demanding one, spread over five years in the style of the English public schools:

Year One (110 boys) Ruddiman’s *Rudiments*⁵⁵⁰ and Valpy’s *Latin Delectus*

Year Two (74 boys, average age 9 1/2) Adam’s *Latin Grammar*, Books 1-3 *Phaedrus* plus three *Lives* from Cornelius Nepos. Charterhouse *Greek Rudiments*⁵⁵¹

Year Three (65 boys, average age 11) *Gallic Wars*, Ovid’s *Elegiac Works*, Adam’s *Grammar Latin versification*. Charterhouse *Greek Rudiments* plus Sandford’s *Greek Exercises*

Year Four (57 boys, average age 12) *Aeneid* Books I-III, Latin prose and verse composition. All of the Charterhouse *Greek Rudiments* and Sandford’s *Greek Exercises*, *New Testament* (extracts) and Anacreon’s *Odes*

Rectors Class (66 boys average age 14) *Aeneid* Books VI and IX, Horace *Odes* all four books, Livy *Roman History* 21st Book, Latin versification. In Greek Lucian’s *Fables*, Anacreon’s *Odes* and the *Anabasis* Book I.

⁵⁴⁸ R. Ford *Thistledown A Book of Scottish Humour Character, Folklore Story & Anecdote* (1913) p 295. Magnusson (1974) p. 113.

⁵⁴⁹ J. Gifford, C. McWilliam and D. Walker *The Buildings of Scotland, Edinburgh* (1984) p. 418.

⁵⁵⁰ This was replaced in the year by a grammar written by one of the classics Masters, Archibald Carmichael

⁵⁵¹ Carmichael again soon supplied the *Edinburgh Academy Greek Grammar*.

The combative Professor of Greek at Edinburgh, George Dunbar, for one, was in no doubt as to why this new school had been created in the metropolis:

Our aristocracy...send their sons to be educated at the great schools and universities of England, perhaps supposing that with us they would be contaminated by coming into contact with plebeian youth, and could not here reach that high pitch of knowledge communicated by southern scholars.⁵⁵²

Dunbar's Scottish hopes for the new school, that it would produce a suitably trained cadre of students for his Greek class, were thwarted, for 'more of its pupils went on to Oxford and Cambridge than for all the others after its foundation': this was regarded as a sign of success by some circles in Scotland.⁵⁵³

The Edinburgh book trade certainly welcomed this new school: the school's classics master, Archibald Carmichael, produced, after the English public school style, two set texts: *Rudiments of the Greek Language for the Use of the Edinburgh Academy* (1826) and *Ruddiman's Rudiments of the Latin Language with Alterations for the Use of Edinburgh Academy* (1826).⁵⁵⁴ One of the leading educational publishers in Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd, clearly perceived the value of using the Academy's name as an imprimatur for selling textbooks: their 1855 *Catalogue of Educational Works* announces the

Edinburgh Academy Class Books ... the acknowledged merit of these school books and the high reputation of the seminary from which they have emanated, supersede the necessity of any lengthened notice'.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵² *Defence* (1848) pp.23-24.

⁵⁵³ M. Cosh *Edinburgh: The Golden Age* (Edinburgh, 2003), p. 805.

⁵⁵⁴ The Greek text is dedicated by Carmichael the Rector, Williams. Until 1863 English private schools like Eton, Harrow and Winchester produced their own Latin and Greek textbooks and it was the decision in this year by the Royal Commission into English Public Schools, under Lord Clarendon, to impose a national Latin grammar that led to the adoption of Kennedy's *Latin Grammar* by the so called 'Clarendon nine' Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Merchant Taylors', Rugby, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester) and other schools. See Stray (1995)

⁵⁵⁵ National Library of Scotland (hereafter N.L.S.), Publishers Archives Oliver and Boyd 1815-1950) Acc. 5000/1424.

By the 1860s, the educational programme at the Academy had been extended to seven years to give the Scottish pupils a better chance to compete, for Oxbridge places, with the older English schoolboys.

Fettes College: ‘The Promotion of High Scholarship or the Promotion of Benevolence’?

The other nineteenth century Edinburgh school which was to have a very direct impact on the teaching of classics in Scotland was Fettes College, opened in 1870. This was the most richly endowed of all Scotland’s new schools but the foundation of the school and its early years were dogged by controversy. Sir William Fettes (1750-1836) twice Lord Provost of Edinburgh made a considerable fortune from two sources: provisioning the army camps in Scotland during the Napoleonic Wars and then after 1815 establishing himself as a banker and property developer.⁵⁵⁶ His will decreed that:

The residue of my whole Estate should form an Endowment for the maintenance, education and outfit of young people whose parents have either died without leaving sufficient funds for that purpose, or who from innocent misfortune during their lives are unable to give suitable education to their children...[the three trustees were instructed] to purchase or feu⁵⁵⁷ a proper situation near Edinburgh and to erect thereon a building suitable to the purposes of the Endowment, which shall be called ‘The Fettes Endowment for the Education, Maintenance and Outfit of Young People’.⁵⁵⁸

This sum amounted to just over £166,000⁵⁵⁹ and yet it was over 30 years before such a building was erected. The delay was due to a number of reasons: Edinburgh was already

⁵⁵⁶ His name was legion. He was one of the committee set up by the Scottish banks to deal with Sir Walter Scott’s bankruptcy in 1826.

⁵⁵⁷ Rent paid to the (feu)dal landowner.

⁵⁵⁸ R. Philp *A Keen Wind Blow: The Story of Fettes College* (1998) p. 2.

⁵⁵⁹ After the payment of £1000 to each of the trustees.

well provided with nine similar charitable hospital institutions and there was growing public anger at the clear mismanagement of the funds of these institutions. Similar disquiet was growing in England about the affairs of her ancient public schools and the attack on the nine best-known schools led to the setting up of the Clarendon Commission, in 1861. The debate in England was further widened to include another 800 middle-class schools, which were examined by the Taunton Commission [1864-1867]. In such a climate, the three lawyers who acted as the trustees to the Fettes Bequest seemed to have felt the wisest course was to invest the vast sum in Government Bonds and to wait and see.⁵⁶⁰

In 1857 three new trustees were appointed: Lord Inglis, Hon. Bouverie Primrose and Hugh Corrie: they agreed that the new institution be called 'Fettes College' and began work on how to spend the funds which now amounted on close to £500,000. The foundation stone was laid in 1864 and the architect of what was to become one of the most flamboyant Gothic Revival buildings in Edinburgh, David Bryce, set to work. The original estimate for the building was £80,000 but the final costs were twice that figure.

The school's opening, in 1870, did not settle the controversy about whether or not the trustees had correctly and legally met the terms of Fettes' will. The matter was finally settled in 1885 when the Commissioners, appointed under the Educational Endowment Act (1882), ruled in favour of the Trustees of Fettes College. Such controversies were not unique: between 1802 and 1818 there were a series of legal battles to decide the correct interpretation of John McNabb's bequest which led, eventually to the foundation of Dollar Institution (later renamed Dollar Academy) and in the 1860s and in the mid-nineteenth century in Edinburgh over who was eligible to attend Heriot's Hospital School in Edinburgh.⁵⁶¹

The school's official historian, Robert Philp, is very clear about the achievement of the first Headmaster, A.W. Potts, 'In 19 years he had established the School as the premier

⁵⁶⁰ The three were Lord Wood, Lord Rutherford and Thomas Corrie who had all been at the Scottish Bar with Fettes.

⁵⁶¹ See R. D. Anderson *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland: Schools & Universities* (Oxford, 1983) pp.172-186, 189-192.

Scottish public school.⁵⁶² The reputation of the College was based on the quality of its teaching of the Classics: for the first 75 years of its existence the Headmaster was always an Oxbridge trained classicist. Links with Oxford and Cambridge were further cemented by the annual appointment of Fellows or Lecturers from Oxbridge to act as Examiners of Fettes' senior pupils.⁵⁶³ The Fettes' headmastership, most highly paid of all Scottish teaching posts,⁵⁶⁴ was, it seemed, closed, until 1958, to Scots. Potts introduced, at Fettes, some of the features he had known as a teacher at Rugby under Dr Arnold, a system of 'prefects and fagging'.⁵⁶⁵ A vital issue at the opening of the school was the question of fees

The (Fettes') Trustees...adjusted Potts recommended fee level (£20) upwards to £25 (still cheaper than most rival schools; at Rugby they were £40).⁵⁶⁶

Cheaper than Fettes' English rivals but not cheaper than the Scottish norm: in 1861 the fees at Edinburgh Academy, admittedly non-residential, were £8.

Classics lay at the heart of the Fettes' curriculum; a modern section ('Mods') had been created by Potts in 1878 but his successor Rev. W.A. Heard (1890-1919) simply referred to those who studied the sciences and modern languages as 'barbarians'.⁵⁶⁷ A boy enrolling in the Classics side at the College would join the First Form, where the average age, in 1885, was just under fourteen and immediately begin his Greek and Latin studies and by the time he entered the Upper Sixth Form he would be studying Sophocles, Thucydides, Homer, Cicero and Horace. In addition his school week included New Testament Greek (*Corinthians I*).⁵⁶⁸ As can be seen in Table 6 (b), page 199, Fettes College did enjoy success in the Latin and Greek examinations that formed part of the Leaving Certificate but greater numbers were entered and equal success was enjoyed in the same examinations by

⁵⁶² R. Philp *A Keen Wind Blows: The Story of Fettes College* (1998) p. 32

⁵⁶³ In July 1885 this (confidential) Examiners Report was compiled by T.C. Snow Fellow of St John's College, Oxford (V and VI Form Greek, Latin and English) and W.S. Hadley Fellow Pembroke College, Cambridge (V and VI Forms Greek, Latin and English). National Archives of Scotland (N.A.S.) ED17/316

⁵⁶⁴ In 1899 the salary was £1,500 p.a. plus 'house and extras', compared to Edinburgh Academy where the Rector's income was £880. Magnusson (1974) p. 267

⁵⁶⁵ Philp (1998) p. 11

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid, p.13

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid p.41

⁵⁶⁸ *Table of Work 1885-1886* N.A.S. Ed 17/316

schools like Glasgow High School, Edinburgh Academy and the Royal High School of Edinburgh.

In the Fettes College *Prospectus* for 1898 it states that there were 50 free places ‘for children of parents who are from innocent misfortune unable to give suitable education or who have died without leaving sufficient funds for that purpose’: the compulsory papers in the Foundation examinations were a General Paper on the Old and New Testament; English, parsing, syntax and dictation; Latin Accidence; Latin prose for translation and Arithmetic.⁵⁶⁹ Very few 14 year-old Scottish boys who were orphans or victims of ‘innocent misfortune’ could enter such a set of examinations with much hope of success.

The Experience of the Many: The Parish School

And yet, and yet and yet! The experience of most Scottish children in the nineteenth century was nothing like any of the schooling thus far described, they were quite simply excluded from these schools by the expense. Unlike England, however, there was as well as the burgh schools a national system of parochial education.⁵⁷⁰ The schoolmaster in even the smallest and poorest of rural parishes would invariably have had or be getting, using his salary to fund it, a university education. This meant inevitably he needed a working knowledge of Latin grammar and had some basic Greek. There is no need for romance here, but this meant that a child from the most ordinary of backgrounds was faced with a teacher who passed on what they could of the classics: this experience is clearly what inspired Alexander Adam at Rafford in the North East, David Livingstone at Blantyre⁵⁷¹ or George Douglas Brown at Colyton, in Ayrshire. Indeed there was great resentment in Scotland at the persistent attempts by Westminster, to classify Scottish parochial schools as the equivalent of English primary schools; at the heart of this dispute was the traditional curriculum subject of Latin, present in very many Scottish parochial schools. This

⁵⁶⁹ N.A.S. ED 17/317, the Fettes College Inspection file.

⁵⁷⁰ The 1826 Survey states that in 585 of the 906 parishes surveyed there were schoolmasters who had received one or more years of university education. See Table 4 (a) p. 74.

⁵⁷¹ See Samuel Smiles (a Scot) in *Self Help* (1864) on the good doctor.

difference is best indicated by an incident recalled by George Ramsay: in the 1860s when Robert Lowe was Vice-President of the Board of Education he greeted a Scottish school's deputation with the following question:

'Would you like your children to learn Quadratic Equations or Latin or Greek?'

When they replied 'Certainly, that is precisely what they have been in the habit of learning, and what we expect our schoolmasters to trained to teach them' his reply was dismissive in the extreme 'I would as soon ask Parliament to pay a poor man's butcher's bills as to pay for his mathematics.'⁵⁷²

The difficulty, in terms of Latin, for this⁵⁷³ was the crucial barrier for social mobility, was simply three issues: what Latin was taught, how often and how well? There are passing references in some of the surviving Ayrshire School Log Books to teaching Latin, thus for example in the Log Book for a tiny primary school, Craigmark School, in the parish of Dalmellington, the following Inspector's comment is recorded for 1886: 'Latin imperfectly said.' But for the next twenty years this School Log Book offers nothing more.⁵⁷⁴ In another school, Newtonhead Primary School, there is this entry for January 28th 1868: 'Began Latin class - the text book being [Archibald Hamilton] Bryce's Latin Book'.⁵⁷⁵ The same school's Log Book has a timetable for the teaching of Latin. In August 1880: 'Collins' *First Year Course*, Third Declension and Revising from First Declension, Mondays and Wednesdays 3.33-4.00.'⁵⁷⁶ An 1887 school's timetable, Glencairn Public School in Kilmarnock, has survived showing the duties of the male Pupil-Teacher, Mr

⁵⁷² Quoted in M. Cruickshank *A History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland* ULP (1970) pp.73-74.

⁵⁷³ Even a man as solitary and determined as David Livingstone knew this and sought help at Glasgow University from the local Catholic, Irish priest, Rev David Gallagher. The help was given and always acknowledged.

⁵⁷⁴ A. A. CO/3/10/7/17 January 22nd 1866 These Log Books came into force in the 1840s and were meant to record the weekly business of the school in question. They are very uneven: some Masters enter little more than the minimum; some are more personal and expansive. All record events such as Inspections by the local Presbytery or an HMI, staff absences, outbreaks of illness such as diphtheria, scarlet fever and cholera and absences by pupils for local events: in terms of the last named this would include Ayr Race Meetings and the harvesting needs of this farming shire for example 'slight absence from turnip weeding July 12 1907 Achinloigh School, Sorn CO3/10/7/3. Sometimes the psychology of the master is revealed 'Burned a Valentine which two of the scholars intended to send' Kingsford School, Stewarton February 13th 1866 AACO3/10/38/1.

⁵⁷⁵ AA CO3/10/7/46/8. Bryce was a master at the Royal High School of Edinburgh.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

Clark: an hour a week teaching 'Latin and Euclid'.⁵⁷⁷ In other Ayrshire records there are passing references to the fact that Latin would often be taught by the Pupil-Teachers; these were

pupils who were at least thirteen years old...of sound moral character, and they had to show themselves to the inspector to be proficient in reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar and geography...If accepted they would be paid an annual stipend of by the Government of £10...they ... [were]...taught outside the school hours [One hour and half each day] by the master.⁵⁷⁸

This arrangement would make sense as the young men in question would either be preparing for a University Bursary Examination and therefore have a reasonable standard of Latin at their command or would be undergraduates interrupting their studies to raise the necessary funds to continue them, the latter would have completed one or two years Latin at university. There seems only one reference, in the records that have survived in Ayrshire, to the teaching of Greek: 'September 13th 1895 John Kently reading Xenophon Book Chapter 1 (5)'.⁵⁷⁹ This small village school, Waterside in the Parish of Dalmellington, was clearly exceptional; an entry for the following year reads: 'February 21st 1896 Latin (First Stage) making better progress lately: at present at Third Conjugation of Verbs. Girls much superior to boys.' A clue as to why this small town⁵⁸⁰ could produce teaching in both the classical languages is perhaps provided by the entry for April 14th 1896 'School closed as Rector [James Smith] to attend graduation at Glasgow University to receive the degree of M.A.'⁵⁸¹ The Ayrshire Archives hold the Victorian records for 67 of the local schools, but, regarding the teaching of the Classics in the nineteenth century, no very clear pattern can be identified.

⁵⁷⁷ A.A. CO3/10/7/1 p.63.

⁵⁷⁸ T.R. Bone *School Inspection in Scotland 1840-1966* (1968) pp.35-36

⁵⁷⁹ Waterside Public School AA CO3/10/7/59/1.

⁵⁸⁰ The population of Dalmellington and the surrounding hamlets was given as 5034 [1891 Census].

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.

There does exist, however a very detailed portrait of the workings of Scotland's Parish Schools from the 1830s to the 1890s, in one area of Scotland, the North-East of the country: the Inspection Reports of the Dick Bequest. This Bequest was created by the Will of James Dick of Forres, Morayshire: 'The Dominie's Maecenas'.⁵⁸² Dick had, in 1762, at the age of nineteen travelled to the West Indies where in the space of twenty years he made his fortune. Returning to London in 1783 he further increased his wealth by 'persevering habits and judicious speculation.'⁵⁸³ He died in 1828 and he gave nearly his whole fortune, some £113,000, to 'the maintenance and assistance of the Country Parochial schoolmaster in his native county of Elgin or Moray and in the neighbouring Counties of Banff and Aberdeen.'⁵⁸⁴ Dick's aim was very clear:

to elevate the literary character of the Parochial Schoolmaster and the Schools aforesaid... [but]...No schoolmaster shall be entitled to any benefits from the fund unless he shall first submit himself to examination of the Mangers or a Committee of their number.⁵⁸⁵

Dick also insisted that this legacy be geographically restricted, only those who taught in the 'three Counties of Aberdeen Banff and Murray' were eligible and further still 'all schoolmasters of the Royal Burghs situated within the said three named Counties are hereby excluded from all benefits from the said fund'. He thus debarred those teaching at the better-endowed schools, with larger school rolls and therefore higher salaries in the city like Aberdeen and royal burghs like Elgin and Banff.

Thus, in 1833, after the inevitable battle in Chancery, a system of written examinations and inspection was established by the Trustees of the Dick Bequest. The examination papers ten in number could be taken over a two-year cycle: the subjects for examination being Latin, Greek, English, History, Arithmetic, Physics, Geometry, Geography, Algebra and Trigonometry. The schedule was punishing:

⁵⁸² Title of a laudatory chapter by R T. Skinner, *Yesterday and Today* (Edinburgh, 1929) pp. 74-80.

⁵⁸³ *Report of the Dick Bequest* (1854) p. 5.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid* p. 1.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid* pp. 9-11.

Every Candidate must, at his first attendance at the Examination, profess to be examined upon not less than *five* of the ten subjects of written trial, including English, Arithmetic and Latin, the profession of these three in the first year being indispensable.⁵⁸⁶

If the candidate was successful, that is judged '*fair*' or above in his written examination and if the inspection of his school and his teaching methods was judged appropriate, the rewards were considerable. The average salary of 146 Parochial Schoolmasters, in the prescribed three shires, in 1853 was £54 5s 4d, but with the addition of the allowance from the Bequest this was raised to on average £85 12s 3d, more than a third of an increase.

The most revealing aspect of the Trust's activities was the unannounced annual inspection of schools eligible to claim under the terms of the Bequest: some 528 schools embracing 13 Presbyteries where 433 pupils were studying Latin and 36 Greek.⁵⁸⁷ The first tour of inspection took place in the spring 1833, undertaken by Allan Menzies a solicitor and Clerk to the Dick Trustees.⁵⁸⁸ His journey began on March 20th and ended on May 8th and in that time he had visited 143 schools and travelled 1,273 miles.⁵⁸⁹ The reports of these unannounced visits contain vivid portraits of the lonely teacher's life:

The schoolmaster is a very young man (age 32) very dirty in his person and teaching in a schoolhouse the state of which I cannot describe otherwise than as abominable and more becoming of a pig sty than a seminary for youth (Dallas, March 23rd 1833).

Worse still:

Schoolmaster, Mr James Milne 46 years old of age very slovenly in his person and his mode of teaching is equally so. He labours under weakness of temper (Bellie, April 2nd).

The problem here and elsewhere was that the appointment was made *ad vitam aut culpam*:

⁵⁸⁶ S. Laurie *Report on Education Addressed to the Trustees of the Dick Bequest* (Edinburgh, 1865) p.354.

⁵⁸⁷ N.A.S. GD1/4/123.

⁵⁸⁸ He was later appointed, in 1847, Professor of Conveyancing at the University of Edinburgh.

⁵⁸⁹ NLS GD1/4/128. The Dick Papers include fifty-eight years of visitations from 1833 to the 1890s.

The Duke of Gordon (the heritor) some years since offered him an annuity of £30 if he would resign and upon his refusal endowed a private school in the village.

In one case the health of the master has collapsed:

The Schoolmaster is deranged in his mind and at present wandering at large in Aberdeenshire. He had been very unskilful and unsuccessful as a Teacher (Cullen, April 2nd).

In another case drink or some such seems to have played a part:

Mr Cheyne (has)...occasional fits of unsteadiness in consequence of indulgences, which unsettle him. At one time he absconded in a fit of that description and went to London, leaving the school....for three weeks. He was in consequence deprived of the offices of Elder and Session Clerk...Sometime since he was married and that for a few months seemed to produced a change for the better (but) the unfortunate propensities have been reported to have resumed their influence, (Monquhitter, April 15th).

Unsteady or not, he kept his post for another 25 years.⁵⁹⁰ Set against this Menzies notes examples of devoted teaching: 'Mr Alex Tocher, the old blind teacher (78 years of age) still goes about assisting scholars....Horace well translated and parsed (Macduff, Gamrie April 4th).' Keeness, too, does not go unrecorded: 'Mr Murray (25 years of age) appears to be an active young man...he is very zealous. He roars very loud to his pupils'. (New Spynie, March 22nd).

Menzies comments too on the financial circumstances of dominies 'The Schoolmaster is unmarried and is understood to have amassed a considerable sum of money' (Botriphnie April 1st). Examples of venality are noted:

Mr Carr keeps a grocery shop to eke out his living which I discerned from a sign over his door, it having not been mentioned under the head of Emoluments from Other Sources in his return, (Logie, Buchan April 8th).

⁵⁹⁰ Report (1865) Appendix VI p. 398.

He notes too the isolation too of some schools, for example:

in a most remote and unfrequented region inaccessible by gig. I left mine at Ruthven two and half miles away...it has in the winter been attended by a 100 [pupils] or upwards, the scholars are dropping off as the labouring seasons approaches, (March 27th).⁵⁹¹

The squalor of some schools must have added to the burdens of teaching, thus at Shannas, Old Deer the school 'consists of a single small room and bed closet, no kitchen or anything else...he has no servant, but a woman comes once a week to bake for him' (April 9th), or again in the same Presbytery 'schoolhouse very poor there being no chimneys, no ceiling, turf roof not concealed inside and clay floor (Clochan, April 9th).'

The Trustees were unable to remove a schoolmaster but his piety, or more importantly the lack of it, were duly recorded by Menzies:

The teacher Thomas Donald is a man of 60 apparently possessed of great natural talents, which from unanimous testimony...have been prostituted to the most unworthy and abandoned purposes. Charges of the most serious description have been made against him and though never publicly investigated receive general credit. He is said to be profoundly irreligious and is deemed a great moral nuisance to the Parish. The scholars seem very well grounded in Latin and pretty well in English...Donald is afflicted with the gravel and can scarcely walk. He is said to be wealthy, (Edenkillie, March 25th).

This contrasts with the school at Advie (Cromdale), the next day 'Before beginning to read the Bible, the scholars make obeisance.'

In terms of the teaching of Latin and Greek, Menzies notes what he regards as good and bad practice:

Latin is taught [by] translation read and free and the examination upon parsing and construction affording the most satisfactory evidence of the correctness with which

⁵⁹¹ Tomintoul, Banffshire at 1,160 ft the highest village in the Highlands is invariably cut off each winter by snow,.

the principles have been taught...Mr Head appears to be a teacher of a singularly high order, (Speymouth, March 29th).

Another example is provided by the school at Banff Hilltown:

Mr Smith is the principal teacher of the Academy. He teaches exclusively the Latin classes which contain at present 51...his pupils are taught with a vigour and correctness superior to anything I have yet seen. Heard English translated into Latin, the Master dictating the English in order to point out the proper arrangement for the Latin idiom, variations in the translation required and great precision and delicacy displayed in selecting the best of varied forms, (April 4th).

At Forglen he notes a rather eccentric style of teaching Latin versification:

Population of the parish is only 820, the number of scholars upon its roll is 101...In Latin Virgil read... [in a] singular fashion here. The line being read in feet, so as to prove the scholar's knowledge of scanning.

Three days after hears a very different story 'Latin very bad-full of false translations, false quantities not corrected by the teacher' (Foveran, April 8th). This issue of quantity may perhaps have something to do with Menzies' struggle with the Doric accents of the pupils. Certainly in some cases the master seems ill-equipped to teach Latin; at Old Meldrum he simply states 'The Master is deficient in Latinity' (April 26th). In another case it is not the teacher's fault, 'the only Latin scholar a stupid boy' (Inveraven, March 27th).

Establishing a National Standard: School Inspection

In 1840 a Committee of the Privy Council was established to disburse government grants to British schools with Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth as its Secretary. It was he who created a system of inspection to see that government funds were fairly disbursed. The situation in Scotland was therefore very delicate, as there was no national need, unlike in England, for a large school building programme and therefore there was no need to apply for major grants; a system of inspection was already in place and it was under the direct and accepted

control of the established church. The Kirk's right of inspection was enshrined in statute so any 'interference' from London could be legally challenged in the Scottish courts. Sir James' approach to the General Assembly over the appointment of the first government inspector for schools in Scotland is a model of tact:

The Committee of the Council on Education have had under consideration the Testimonials of Mr John Gibson at present English teacher at the Madras school, St Andrews, who has been recommended to them as a fit and proper person to be appointed Inspector of Schools in Scotland...the Committee are desirous to ascertain, whether the Education Committee of the Church of Scotland can furnish their Lordships with information respecting Mr Gibson, as my Lordships are desirous that the person selected...should be acceptable to the Committee of the General Assembly.⁵⁹²

The Kirk was in favour, Gibson was a man 'eminently qualified to discharge the important duties of the office'.⁵⁹³ Gibson, a widely respected teacher, was appointed but seceded from the established church in the Great Disruption, of 1843, and as a consequence the established church demanded, successfully, that he be removed from his post.⁵⁹⁴

In the period 1840-1860, 13 Inspectors were appointed by Kay-Shuttleworth, of whom 6 were classicists.⁵⁹⁵ Some of these Scottish Inspectors maintained a very keen interest in the classics: one Inspector, John Kerr (1860-1902), acted as external examiner in both Latin and Greek at the Universities of Edinburgh and at Glasgow, another, Robert Ogilvie (1869-1899), was the author of *Horae Latinae: Studies in Synonyms and Syntax* (Longmans, 1901). These early Scottish Inspectors had basically three tasks: to examine applications for new building programmes, to inspect and report on schools receiving government

⁵⁹² Letter dated 4th July 1840 in T. R. Bone 'School Inspection in Scotland 1840-1966' Ph.D. thesis (University of Glasgow, 1966) Appendix C p. 362.

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁴ He became Educational Organizer for the new Free Church, but returned in order to be an HMI for their new schools, leaving that post to become Headmaster and Proprietor of Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh.

⁵⁹⁵ Bone in his thesis produces a series of spread sheets with Inspectors' names and dates of appointment of all H.M.I.s between 1840 and 1900, sometimes, but not always he indicates their field of expertise.

grants and to report on the state of education in a particular district when requested. Inevitably their work was concerned largely with the elementary and parochial school. Some tours of duty were very flamboyant affairs: in 1883 HMI Charles Wilson conducted his tour of inspection along the west coast of Scotland, from Oban to Ullapool, by means of a racing yacht; presumably with the Department's benediction.

The most influential figure in Scottish education in the period in question was not a member of the Schools' Inspectorate but a career civil servant, the *eminence grise* of Victorian Scottish education, Henry Craik. A serious omission in Davie's book, *The Democratic Intellect*, is the absence of any discussion of the role the Scotch Education Department and its most powerful servant, Sir Henry Craik. He was in many ways the embodiment of the anglophile, bureaucratic forces that Davie saw as the relentless and powerful threat to Scotland's educational traditions. Craik was born in Glasgow a son of the manse and attended both the High School and the University of his native city.⁵⁹⁶ He then proceeded, in 1865, to Balliol as a Snell Exhibitioner after Oxford joined the Education Department in London. His ascension to real power came in 1885 with his appointment as Secretary of the Scotch Education Department which formed an important part a new government department under the control of the of the Secretary for Scotland:

Thus English control of Scottish education came to an end, though the head quarters of the Scotch Education Department remained in London, at Dover House, Whitehall

is the, perhaps, rather simplistic view expressed in the standard text on these developments.⁵⁹⁷ Ministers came and went but he remained a constant for nineteen years as the 'instigator of most changes of policy as well as being in charge of all routine business.'⁵⁹⁸ One of his first policy decisions was to announce in 1885, by means of Circular 74, that an inspection was to be conducted into endowed schools as set out in the

⁵⁹⁶ His father had served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

⁵⁹⁷ *School Inspection in Scotland 1840-1966* (Edinburgh, 1968) p.118 Admittedly the Department did establish an 'outpost' in Queen Street, Edinburgh.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

Educational Endowment Act of 1882: burgh schools had been made subject to regular inspection by the Education (Scotland) Act of 1878. The first endowed schools to be selected for inspection was Fettes College and, as it seems everything else connected with that school, in the 1880s, this decision and the subsequent inspection generated controversy.

Craik was also prepared, in the case of certain favoured schools, to overlook any possible conflict of interest: between 1895 and 1904 George MacDonald inspected Ayr Academy every year save one, 1900, and often as the sole Inspector. This was, of course, the school where Macdonald had been a pupil but much more significantly his father had been Rector. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Macdonald concluded one of his Ayr inspections by saying 'It would be difficult to overestimate the value of the advantages which the existence of such an institution brings within the reach of the community.'⁵⁹⁹

This pattern was repeated at Kelvinside Academy, where Macdonald on three occasions inspected the school where he had been a teacher (1887-1892), and his father Rector: 'I may say at once that the general impression left upon me was a highly favourable one.'⁶⁰⁰ The 'best of fathers' could expect no less from a dutiful son.⁶⁰¹

Those who knew Craik well all agree he was a consummate civil servant and quite prepared to be ruthless in gaining his own way, so his behaviour in this context does appear perhaps a little out of character. One man who knew him better than most, Sir George MacDonald, described him as 'Temperamentally irascible, he did not always find it easy to appreciate the opposite point of view.'⁶⁰² Craik clearly and rightly saw himself as a pillar of the English establishment: a product of not just Glasgow but also Balliol, but he is perhaps a more paradoxical figure than he at first appears; for this high Tory of the old

⁵⁹⁹ N.A.S Ed 17/1114^h June 1897.

⁶⁰⁰ N.A.S. Ed 17/94 Report dated 20th May 1900. The years in question were 1900, 1902 and 1903. His father left Ayr Academy in 1883 and retired from Kelvinside Academy in 1895.

⁶⁰¹ See footnote 456 p. 154

⁶⁰² In the DNB (1922-1930) Macdonald suggests that Craik found the idea of compromise and consensus very difficult and this hampered his career as an MP (1906-1927)

school identified the key flaw in the most distinctive feature of Scottish schooling, the parish school:

If the battle of Waterloo was according to the often-quoted saying won in (sic) the playing fields of Eton, the success of Scotchmen in after life was often due to the training of the parish schools. The contrast between the two courses of education sums up many of the features that marked off Scottish from English national life. But this distinctive peculiarity had its evident dangers. There was a strong temptation to the teacher of scholarship and culture to neglect the rank and file of his scholars for the selected few. To prepare two or three pupils annually for the University was a more attractive employment than the laborious drilling of the mass of the children in the rudiments of elementary education, especially to one whose classical training had been gained at the University. And it had the further advantage of increasing the reputation of the school and promising better prospects of preferment to the teacher. Before the more imperious national duty of meeting the claims of every child to the first elements of education, the more ornamental scholarship imparted to a few must doubtless give way.⁶⁰³

Thus the Tory Craik makes a plea for those who were excluded from the ideology of the 'lad o' pairts'.

Establishing a National Standard: A National Examination, for the Few

Craik would have been only too aware of the explosion in written examinations in mid-Victorian Britain: for the professions, for the Civil Service especially the Indian Civil Service and increasingly for entry into university. In 1838 the University of London had introduced the London Matriculation Examination open to all aged over 16 and the 'London Matric' was widely used as an entry qualification for more than simply the entrance requirement for London's degree programmes. It quickly gained status and respect throughout the Empire. In 1857 the University of Oxford Delegacy of Local

⁶⁰³ H. Craik *The State in its Relation to Education* (1914) pp. 153-154.

Examinations was established and a year later Cambridge set up its own examination board. Craik it seems was very much in favour of a Scottish 'gold standard' and was the driving force behind it. But what was much more audacious, and this gives the measure of the man, was the fact that he was utterly determined to keep the control within the Education Department and not surrender control to the Scottish universities. If a less robust figure had been in post in Dover House, Scotland might well have gone down the path taken by England's northern municipal universities: in 1903 the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham and Sheffield created the Northern Joint Matriculation Board.

The process began when Craik issued Circular 74 (1886) indicating that:

In connection with the inspection in schools, the suggestion was made that their Lordships should issue a certificate, based on the highest classes in these schools which would serve as a measure of the attainment fairly to be expected in the case of pupils completing a course of secondary education.⁶⁰⁴

This is of course a very different and very much more restrictive model, even at this preparatory stage, than the London 'Matric'. Scottish schools certainly saw the appeal of such an examination if their pupils could shine and thus bring great intellectual kudos to the school. George Ramsay, Professor of Humanity at Glasgow, typically demanded that the examination be made open to all: on Craik's watch that was extremely unlikely to say the least.

Schools were then invited, by Circular 91 (1888), to state what should be the subjects examined; there was very broad acceptance for the following subjects: English with some History and Geography, Mathematics, Latin, Greek, French and German. A few, like Paisley Grammar and Loretto, raised a call for science subjects but the agreed list was very much the traditional classical course. Provision had to be made for two levels: for those going to a university place and for others following a career in commerce. Two major

⁶⁰⁴ Quoted in T. B. Dobbie *The Scottish Leaving Certificate 1888-1908*, in *Studies in the History of Scottish Education* ed. T. R. Bone (London, 1967) p. 137.

problems remained, both regarding credibility, to be addressed: who was to administer the examination and how widely would it be accepted north and south of the Tweed. The first diet of the new examination was set for June 1888 and to try and placate the universities Craik agreed that 'a university professor' should vet each question paper.

Craik however was well aware that acceptance of the Leaving Certificate by the Scottish universities, the General Medical Council, the Civil Service Commission or the Royal College of Surgeons, although welcome, was not the real prize; in order to have the private schools of Scotland and especially in Edinburgh involved in this new award, he needed to have the qualification recognized by Oxford and Cambridge. This he achieved in 1890, both Cambridge and Oxford accepted as an equivalent to their Examination:

A Certificate from the Scotch Education, endorsed by the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board, showing that the holder has obtained an Honours Certificate in Greek or Latin, or a Higher Grade Certificate in French or German.⁶⁰⁵

As has been stated already the examination was taken at either Lower or Higher Level, but Craik added a category to the latter, for the most able candidates, *Honours*. This new category of pass seems to have been created either for those intending to join 'the Heaven born' (the Indian Civil Service), or as already has been noted those wishing to enter Oxbridge or perhaps those intending to take the new specialised Honours degrees at Scottish universities.

Initially the certificates were issued in individual subjects and the early raw statistics make interesting reading [see Table 6(b)]. Clearly, in 1888, schools like Edinburgh Academy miscalculated by a wide margin the true ability of their Lower Latin entrants: 23 entered only one passed. Also the suspicion is perhaps justified that some schools, like Kelvinside Academy, were very selective about who they entered, only five entered for Lower Latin. The schools which did best were two of Scotland's oldest: Ayr Academy and the Royal High School of Edinburgh. In the following year the pattern is repeated, schools simply

⁶⁰⁵ *University of Oxford Responsions 1894-1895*, p. 8.

over-estimated their students, at least in terms of Honours and it is very clear that the numbers those entering for Greek Honours have dramatically decreased, and one school, Glasgow Academy, presented no candidates.

The introduction of the Leaving Certificate had an effect on the inspection of the schools entering candidates as it was seen to supplement, in a very public way, the academic status of these seminaries. But the new examination came in for a great deal of criticism in Scotland, its critics argued that at by restricting entry only to those studying in the 'Higher Grade/ Higher Class Schools' they were running counter to the Scottish educational idea of access for all.⁶⁰⁶

The hope had been that once the examination had been established it would be thrown open to all; clearly this was not going to happen as Craik, it seems, wanted to create a new tier in Scottish education which was defined in terms of access to this national examination. The universities, led by Glasgow's George Ramsay a fierce defender of the Scottish tradition disassociated themselves from this policy. Amongst the most important and trenchant critics of this perceived elitism were the Scottish schoolteachers who were vocal and very well organized. They were represented by the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), founded in 1847, the oldest teaching trade union in the world.⁶⁰⁷ Within a year of its foundation, 2,000 of Scotland's 5,000 teachers had joined the Institute, the entrance qualification being passage of the Institute's own examinations. The first President was Leonhard Schmitz, Rector of the Royal High School, and foundation members included Professors Pillans, Blackie, and Geddes. This was clearly a force to be reckoned with and its public weekly voice was its own *Educational News*, first published January 1st 1876, price one penny. The EIS cautiously welcomed the new examination but certainly not the idea of it only being available to an elite group of schools. In December

⁶⁰⁶ 'Higher Class Schools' were exclusively concerned with post-elementary work and usually in private hands like Fettes College or Edinburgh Academy. 'Higher Grade Schools' were schools under public control which combined elementary and some secondary instruction, a school like Ayr Academy would fall into this category. In terms of the Leaving Certificate in 1890 only 50 schools were involved in the examination.

⁶⁰⁷ The EIS is also unique in the fact that unlike any other British trade union it has the right, granted by Royal Charter, to award degrees, 'Fellow of the Educational Institute of Scotland.'

1889 they protested, by means of a Memorial addressed to the Scotch Education Department (SED) stating that the basis for this examination was class and income, and that it raised for the first time in Scottish educational history a barrier between the children of those could afford to send their sons to the higher class schools and those of the great majority who were unable to do so.⁶⁰⁸

The Institute's pressure on Craik was successful in that he was eventually asked by his political master, Secretary of State for Scotland Lord Lothian, to explain the Department's policy decision on this issue. Circular 140 of April 26th 1892, from the Scotch Education Department, informed Scottish schools that this examination was now open to those attending any post elementary education. The numbers rose dramatically, in 1893, after this announcement: 1399 presented for Latin rather than the 586 of the year before, 685 for Greek instead of 349.

The EIS was not the only critic of the SED in general and the work of Craik in particular: two of the most robust critics were, significantly, the two men appointed to Scotland's first university Chairs of Education: John Meiklejohn (St Andrews) and Simon Laurie (Edinburgh). For Meiklejohn the Scottish school system was in crisis:

The Education Department, as it was at present, possessed a quite vicious constitution. The whole of the secondary education of Scotland was entirely at the mercy of one man...In addition to the primal vice of the constitution of the Department, its procedure was vicious.⁶⁰⁹

Laurie was equally blunt 'the Department consisted of one man, dependent on his Inspector for local information'.⁶¹⁰ Laurie is in many ways a fascinating dissenter⁶¹¹ to the centralist tendencies of Craik and the SED: he was for over 50 years (1856-1907) an Inspector and Examiner for the Dick Bequest so he was well versed in the virtues of the

⁶⁰⁸ Dobie p. 162.

⁶⁰⁹ *The Scotsman*, November 7th 1892, quoted in Phillip (1992) p.38

⁶¹⁰ Ibid

⁶¹¹ The National Library of Scotland holds Laurie's personal copy of his pamphlets bound as one volume. The flyleaf has the following *nunc dimittis* in his hand: 'Of use to anyone surveying the History of Education in Scotland. *Not to be reprinted*- they served their purpose. S.S.L.' *Occasional Papers* AB 4. 2007. 07 (1-10)

parochial school tradition in the north east of Scotland. He was also most insistent on the perennial importance of the Classics, 'Latin cannot die: Greek will live as long as civilization lives'⁶¹² but not at the expense of science, 'the universities should be great schools for the advancement of science'.⁶¹³

As R. D Anderson has pointed out Laurie has an Arnoldian reverence for the value of classical learning in the classroom:

The key to Laurie's attitudes was that he thought of the classics not as an instrument of social ambition, but as a liberalizing influence which could give 'tone' to the rural school even when they were studied by only a handful of children.⁶¹⁴

Yet Laurie was in no doubt as to what had emasculated education in Scotland, the lack of political autonomy:

Dover House [London home of the Scotch Education Department] relieves Scotsmen of all responsibility. A national administration within Scotland... I have advocated for 35 years and advocate now. If the tiends [tithes] had been thrown into a common fund and sent to London to be administered through Minutes by a wing of Dover House where would the Ecclesiastical spirit of Scotland be? Crushed out under a bureaucratic despotism... now if there be one thing more than another, next to religion, which keeps the spirit of a nation patriotic and living, it is the management of its own education...it is the duty of the few who understand the great political issues involved in education to act for the masses and give them light and leading.⁶¹⁵

Other critics of the effects of the 1872 Education Act on the parish school tradition were George Ramsay and James Donaldson, the latter being a product of James Melvin's

⁶¹² S. S. Laurie *Introductory Address 1898: Secondary Education in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1898) p. 8.

⁶¹³ S. S. Laurie *On the Educational Wants of Scotland 1881* (Edinburgh, 1881) p. 5

⁶¹⁴ R. D. Anderson *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland: Schools and Universities* (Oxford, 1983) p. 235

⁶¹⁵ S. S. Laurie *Introductory address* (898) p. 18.

teaching at Aberdeen Grammar needed no reminding of the Scottish tradition. Table 6 (c) provides some detail on how the ancient languages fared in examination enrolment terms as compared to the modern languages. Latin's position was secure due to the fact that it was still a compulsory subject in university Arts Faculties. Greek survived even after it ceased to be a compulsory university requirement because many of those on the 'Classics side' would take both ancient languages. The uncertain fortunes of German were perhaps due to the political climate beyond the classroom and French continued its inexorable rise until in 1914 only one subject, English, had more presentations (10,658)

There was to be, however, before Craik left his post, one more significant decision in the development of this qualification. Under pressure from professional bodies Craik conceded that the Leaving Certificate should be a group award, and from 1904, to gain the group award, the full Leaving Certificate, candidates had to pass four subjects: Higher English, Higher Mathematics and a pass in Higher or Lower Latin plus one other. This group award was virtually impossible to attain for someone from a humble background Latin's presence was justified in that it was a compulsory requirement for entry into Scotland's universities, but that has nothing all to do with a new national qualification, which was promoted as a qualification for the nation. Craik had created, according to one recent historian, 'one of the most centrally organized educational systems in the world by 1918'.⁶¹⁶

It was the system of inspection and examination introduced by Craik that did most to change the relationship between Scotland's schools and universities and nowhere was the old relationship more staunchly defended than in Aberdeen and the surrounding shires.

⁶¹⁶ T. Devine *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* (1999) p.398.

Table 6 (b)
Scottish Leaving Certificate. Examination Presentations: Ancient and Modern Languages, 1888-1914

Source: National Archives of Scotland (NAS) MS ED 37/1-27

	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Greek</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>French</i>
1888	442	315	265	486
1889	664	452	731	1138
1890	755	487	871	1302
1891	905	550	969	1333
1892	586	349	1249	1933
1893	1399	685	1552	2646
1894	1606	768	1811	3175
1895	1790	865	1969	4227
1896	2088	848	2167	5335
1897	2317	863	2436	5749
1898	2349	811	2532	6257
1899	2547	895	2716	6551
1900	2690	888	2702	7010
1901 ⁶¹⁷	2855	872	2741	7195
1902 ⁶¹⁸	1419	829	2734	7346
1903	3096	840	2660	4079
1904 ⁶¹⁹	3365	879	2472	7402
1905 ⁶²⁰	3369	836	2351	7441
1906	3841	864	2133	7613
1907	4992	931	1940	8129
1908 ⁶²¹	4674	858	1535	8220
1909	4845	705	1308	8408
1910	4449	694	1211	9094
1911	5502	649	1238	9528
1912	4934	571	1133	9361
1913	4796	551	1360	9510
1914	4606	593	1498	9776

⁶¹⁷ First diet of *Spanish*, 6 candidates

⁶¹⁸ First diet of *Commercial French* (2)

⁶¹⁹ First diet of *Commercial German* (1)

⁶²⁰ First diet of *Gaelic* (94) from Highland and Hebridean schools

⁶²¹ First diet of *Italian* (1)

Table 6 (c)

SCOTTISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE

RESULTS

1888-1900, 1904-1906

Leaving Certificate 1888 Source: NAS MS ED37/1

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	6	2	3	6	2	3	6	2	3	6	2	3
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	23	6	0	1	2	0	19	6	0	10	4	0
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	18	17	3	17	6	3	18	5	3	18	5	3
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	2	3	0	2	3	0	2	3	0	2	3	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	0	19	5	2	14	2	0	10	5	5	4	1
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	5	1	2	4	1	2	4	3	0	4	1	0

Total for All (29) Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
442	297	67%	315	251	80%

Leaving Certificate 1889¹ Source: NAS MS ED37/2

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	6	10	5	8	12	1	3	9	4	4	8	2
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	3	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	20	10	8	18	8	4	15	13	5	17	5	2
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	14	6	5	17	9	0	9	14	2	6	1	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	3	0	3	5	1	0	3	3	0	2	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
664	494	74%	452	320	71%

¹ No entry from Glasgow Academy

Leaving Certificate 1890² Source: NAS MS ED37/3

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	12	13	8	12	4	6	2	4	7	2	6	2
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	0	9	0	0	7	0	0	7	0	3	2	0
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	28	13	4	25	6	2	22	8	4	12	0	1
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	26	12	5	26	7	0	21	9	2	13	0	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	8	4	0	6	2	0	7	2	0	3	0	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
755	573	76%	487	237	49%

² Glasgow Academy did not present pupils.

Leaving Certificate 1891³ Source: NAS MS ED37/4

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	18	2	3	15	5	0	7	2	3	6	4	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	12	20	6	15	11	1	22	4	2	8	4	1
<i>Fettes College</i>	7	26	20	7	36	8	15	15	20	16	25	4
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	17	10	5	9	11	0	11	6	5	6	8	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	40	15	6	38	12	0	30	10	3	12	1	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	9	4	1	9	3	0	10	2	0	4	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
905	611	68%	550	267	49%

³ Fettes College enters the lists for the first time

Leaving Certificate 1892⁴ Source: NAS MS ED37/5

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
Ayr Academy	13	5	3	12	5	2	6	0	5	4	3	1
Edinburgh Academy	30	15	4	21	10	2	16	0	3	7	3	0
Fettes College	26	13	10	26	16	7	25	13	10	22	13	5
Edinburgh Royal High School	17	6	4	12	5	2	13	4	4	8	4	1
Glasgow Academy	8	5	2	4	3	0	7	3	0	0	1	0
Glasgow High School	38	20	6	36	15	1	31	13	1	16	3	0
Kelvinside Academy	10	5	0	6	5	0	4	3	0	2	2	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
586	451	77%	349	231	66%

⁴ Examination now opened to 'Higher Departments' (63) as well as 'Higher Schools' (52): pass rates in Latin were higher in the former than the latter 69%:67% in Greek situation reversed 39%:57%

Leaving Certificate 1893⁵ Source: NAS MS ED37/6

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
Ayr Academy	26	6	3	22	4	0	5	4	3	7	2	0
Edinburgh Academy	45	21	6	7	12	3	25	10	2	17	13	1
Fettes College	6	29	18	6	38	8	13	21	6	2	22	7
Edinburgh Royal High School	25	8	0	17	7	0	17	9	0	16	1	0
Glasgow Academy	14	3	0	11	0	0	7	0	0	5	0	0
Glasgow High School	36	19	6	20	14	0	26	13	2	18	8	0
Kelvinside Academy	6	4	1	3	2	0	5	0	1	41	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1399	744	53%	685	461	67%

⁵ Another dramatic increase 55 'Higher Schools' and 97 'Higher Departments'

Leaving Certificate 1894 Source: NAS MS ED37/7

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	17	8	4	8	9	0	10	3	4	7	3	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	46	20	5	19	13	1	28	16	5	23	5	1
<i>Fettes College</i>	7	29	19	9	32	9	11	23	19	16	30	6
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	38	8	5	23	11	1	15	17	3	11	3	1
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	16	3	1	11	2	1	12	2	0	8	0	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	47	19	4	24	12	0	26	6	3	19	15	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	8	4	0	4	2	0	6	1	0	4	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1606	768	49%	768	503	65%

Leaving Certificate 1895 Source: NAS MS ED37/8

	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
School	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	16	2	4	15	4	0	10	2	4	6	4	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	49	23	5	18	13	0	22	13	5	11	6	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	9	30	20	10	34	13	16	21	19	16	29	7
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	28	14	5	17	13	2	22	6	4	13	2	2
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	11	6	1	11	5	0	8	3	0	3	2	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	43	25	4	28	8	0	21	16	4	13	4	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	3	5	1	3	2	0	4	3	1	2	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1790	999	56%	865	463	54%

Leaving Certificate 1896 Source: NAS MS ED37/9

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower ⁶	Higher	Honours	Lower ⁷	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	13	18	2	8	2	0	5	5	2	4	6	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	7	15	4	5	9	0	2	12	3	2	13	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	7	30	19	7	44	0	11	26	18	15	39	0
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	21	16	4	17	17	0	14	14	2	12	8	1
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	13	4	3	10	3	2	6	4	1	3	4	1
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	27	19	3	30	12	1	16	11	2	12	8	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	15	2	0	4	0	0	10	2	0	12	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
2088	1257	60	848	545	64%

⁷ This and future diets contained two new categories in both languages: 'Lower Pass on a Higher Paper' and 'Higher Pass on Honours Paper'

Leaving Certificate 1897 Source: NAS MS ED37/10

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	15	6	2	4	5	1	3	4	2	4	4	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	6	12	4	3	12	2	0	8	4	4	4	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	9	27	15	7	30	10	9	25	14	16	22	5
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	17	11	7	10	15	2	9	13	3	4	8	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	12	9	1	5	4	0	8	2	0	4	0	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	51	20	5	44	19	1	16	17	2	19	5	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	8	2	0	2	2	0	6	2	0	1	0	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
2317	1215	52%	863	435	50%

Leaving Certificate 1898 Source: NAS MS ED37/11

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	18	5	2	16	5	0	9	6	1	5	7	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	5	9	2	5	7	0	2	9	2	2	5	1
<i>Fettes College</i>	12	21	15	12	27	9	12	19	15	14	21	7
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	32	9	2	17	9	0	11	7	2	9	6	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	16	5	1	8	4	0	9	3	1	3	3	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	32	31	7	30	29	0	16	21	2	17	11	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	10	0	1	3	0	1	9	1	0	4	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
2349	1534	65%	811	484	60%

Leaving Certificate 1899 Source: NAS MS ED37/12

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	19	6	2	9	6	0	7	3	2	7	2	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	30	10	0	17	5	0	21	10	0	6	1	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	11	29	14	16	23	10	15	21	13	19	23	5
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	26	13	5	27	14	0	24	6	3	17	12	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	17	7	0	9	2	0	12	3	0	3	2	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	52	24	6	29	21	0	15	16	2	12	5	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	9	1	0	6	0	0	4	2	0	4	0	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
2547	1515	59%	895	498	56%

Leaving Certificate 1900 Source: NAS MS ED37/13

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	15	9	2	16	9	0	10	5	1	8	4	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	22	22	2	23	6	0	22	7	2	16	9	1
<i>Fettes College</i>	16	19	21	19	25	10	12	15	20	19	22	4
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	33	23	5	15	16	2	24	11	2	16	10	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	26	10	0	15	5	0	7	6	0	8	0	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	47	26	6	31	21	0	18	12	3	14	13	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	7	3	0	5	2	0	5	2	0	6	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
2690	1555	58%	888	615	69%

Leaving Certificate 1903⁸ Source: NAS MS ED37/16

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	7	11	2	6	10	1	4	9	0	9	3	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	20	19	5	11	13	3	9	11	5	10	12	2
<i>Fettes College</i>	20	33	12	24	39	5	19	18	12	22	19	7
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	23	13	3	8	11	2	12	10	0	9	6	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	28	4	4	19	3	0	12	5	0	10	2	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	47	19	6	21	15	0	18	17	2	10	5	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	4	4	0	3	2	0	0	3	0	0	1	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
3096	1828	57%	840	577	65%

Pupil-Teachers (Subset of above)

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1401	416	30%	38	22	58%

⁸ First year of the Group Certificate

Leaving Certificate 1904 Source: NAS MS ED37/17

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	15	5	4	12	7	1	6	8	0	8	5	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	38	18	6	20	16	2	10	13	6	8	8	1
<i>Fettes College</i>	9	40	13	11	45	3	15	21	13	17	26	4
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	31	6	1	14	6	1	15	5	1	8	5	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	28	15	2	28	7	0	15	17	1	15	3	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	52	20	7	20	18	1	14	2	3	4	14	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	2	0	2	1	2	0	4	1	1	3	2	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
3365	1902	57%	879	569	65%

Pupil-Teachers (Subset of above)

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1401	416	30%	38	22	58%

Leaving Certificate 1905 Source: NAS MS ED37/18

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	11	11	2	8	12	0	3	8	0	5	5	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	42	19	0	22	17	0	14	15	0	8	10	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	15	33	12	11	37	3	15	18	11	16	23	5
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	26	10	1	14	10	0	14	17	1	8	6	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	22	15	2	16	15	0	10	11	0	12	8	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	22	20	3	18	13	0	18	9	0	6	6	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	7	2	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	1	2	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
3369	2076	62%	836	596	71%

Pupil-Teachers (Subset of above)

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
956	534	56%	43	29	67%

Leaving Certificate 1906 Source: NAS MS ED37/19

School	Latin						Greek					
	Presented			Passed			Presented			Passed		
	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours	Lower	Higher	Honours
<i>Ayr Academy</i>	11	12	2	9	13	0	6	6	0	5	6	0
<i>Edinburgh Academy</i>	32	17	0	23	7	0	16	8	0	11	5	0
<i>Fettes College</i>	18	24	13	17	29	2	19	10	13	17	17	4
<i>Edinburgh Royal High School</i>	19	9	2	14	10	0	11	7	2	9	7	0
<i>Glasgow Academy</i>	15	11	4	11	8	0	9	7	2	8	7	0
<i>Glasgow High School</i>	38	21	4	18	15	0	16	9	2	12	9	0
<i>Kelvinside Academy</i>	6	1	0	5	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0

Total for All Schools

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
3841	2032	53%	864	614	71%

Pupil-Teachers (Subset of above)

Latin			Greek		
Presented	Passed	%	Presented	Passed	%
1147	557	49%	49	25	51%

Chapter Seven

‘Under the shadow of the crown’: Aberdeen and the Classics

Grind-grind-grind
Till the brain begins to swim;
Grind-grind-grind,
Till the eyes are heavy and dim.
Homer, Virgil, Euclid,
With numerous others I ween,
Till over my lessons I fall asleep
And get them all in a dream

‘Song of the Student’, *Aberdeen University Magazine*, June 1854

Aberdeen: As Many Universities as England

George Davie, when a student at Edinburgh in the 1930s, was told very firmly by his Professor of Greek, William Calder, ‘You must go to Aberdeen to see what the Scots can do with Greek, when left to themselves.’⁶³⁰ Calder was a graduate of Aberdeen but also completed postgraduate work with Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in Berlin; so there was more to his barb than simply misplaced patriotism or Anglophobia.⁶³¹ Aberdeen is in many ways a case apart in Scotland: geographically it is bounded to the west by the Grampian and Cairngorm Mountains, ranges which include the highest peaks and mountain passes in Great Britain. The city looks north to the Highlands and east to the North Sea and Scandinavia rather than south to Edinburgh and the Tweed. This university has always commanded a vast constituency:

Just look upon our quadrangle on a Competition day. You will see Orcadians and Shetlanders; men from Caithness, Ross and Cromarty; stalwart Highlanders from

⁶³⁰ Taped interview with Davie, 25th April 2002.

⁶³¹ He moved from the Chair of Greek at Manchester to Edinburgh in 1930, aged forty-nine. He retired in 1951.

the western islands and the western counties; and young men from the favoured counties of Inverness, Nairn, Elgin, Banff and Aberdeenshire.⁶³²

Privilege and Competition: The Aberdeen Professors and the Bursary Competition

In terms of the teaching of the classics there are two features that are unique to Aberdeen: that the chairs in Greek and Latin before and after 1860 were the exclusive preserve of their own graduates, and also the number of Aberdeen bursaries offered each year. The preference at Aberdeen was clearly only to appoint to classical chairs those who had studied at Aberdeen. In the case of Greek, from 1791 with the appointment of Gilbert Gerard as Regent to the retirement of John Harrower in 1931 all Professors of Greek were alumni. In Humanity a similar situation prevailed: from 1824 with the appointment of George Ferguson until 1952 with the departure of Peter Noble all were, with one exception Aberdeen graduates, the one exception, being Dr Robert Maclure, an Englishman, who was appointed to the Chair of Humanity at Marischal in 1852. Additionally, in the case of Greek between 1855 and 1968 only three men held the chair: William Geddes, John Harrower and Archie Cameron.⁶³³ The reason for this preference can only be guessed at perhaps south of the Grampians the Edinburgh classical chairs were regarded as prestigious and those at Glasgow as lucrative, but professorships at Aberdeen were seen as neither. The university itself saw no reason to change a system which was so intimately bound up with the schooling of the Highlands.

It was however the Bursary Competition which was the distinguishing characteristic of the Aberdeen system:

There is no need to expatiate...on the importance of the Bursary system at Aberdeen, which goes back to the foundation of both King's and Marischal...For three centuries or more, down to the 1840s, Latin was the only subject tested-traditionally translation into Latin prose, or 'The Version' as it was popularly

⁶³² N. Maclean *Life in a Northern University Aberdeen* 4th edition 1917 p.277.

⁶³³ The record for longevity in post must surely be Professor Sir D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson (Natural History, St Andrews) who was in post for sixty-four years, a record that can never be broken.

known: an unseen passage for translation from Latin to English had been added in the eighteenth century, but until 1846 or '47 it only counted as decisive where competitors had identical marks for their Version. Greek was first added introduced in 1849; Arithmetic in 1851 and then only at Marischal.⁶³⁴

The bursaries at Aberdeen were as old as the foundation of the two colleges and so must rank as amongst the oldest, if not the oldest of all, in Scotland. The Deed of Erection (1505) of King's College states that of the 36 students 13 shall be Bursars in Arts and their qualifications be that they are 'pauperes ad scientias tamen speculativas ingeniosus et habiles' [poor boys who were however adept, skilled and of an investigative bent towards the sciences] and whose parents cannot for their education and maintenance. Bishop Elphinstone had earlier, in 1502, instituted a bursary of £3 10s (Scots) 'which survived for nearly 500 years.' Marischal's Charter of Erection in 1593 by George, 5th Lord Marischal of Scotland, provided £30 (Scots) annually 'pro anno victu ex redditibus Academiae' [provided annually to support the Academy] to six Bursars. At the heart of any examination would of course be Latin; a fact underlined by the regulations of 1549, which said that none may be admitted to a bursary without having been first examined by the Principal and other examiners or regents.

Other Scottish universities offered bursaries but Aberdeen offered more than all the others put together. They were usually decided on the basis of open competition and these scholarships were usually restricted to students in the Faculty of Arts. In 1844, for example, King's College and Marischal College offered 240 bursaries; by comparison Glasgow at the same period offered only 36⁶³⁵ bursaries, many 'closed' by a variety of reasons: surname (James Adam Bursary); or in the gift of a particular patron (Duke of Hamilton who oversaw the Dundonald Bursary); or location (Lamb Bursary where preference given 'to those born in the parish of Carmichael or Pittenain, whom failing may

⁶³⁴ C. Patrick Edwards 'Aberdeen and its Classical Tradition,' *Aberdeen University Review*, No 176 Autumn (1986), p. 417.

⁶³⁵ *Report of Twenty One Years' Experience of the Dick Bequest* p. 372 (Edinburgh, 1854).

be chosen from any other parish in the Presbytery of Lanark').⁶³⁶ In all, in 1865 only 4 of the 36 Bursaries available at Glasgow were open to all.⁶³⁷ At St Andrews the 1852 Calendar, the first published, gives details of 64 Bursaries 13 of which are closed. At Edinburgh in 1858 there are 8 Bursaries only 6 of which are open to all-comers.⁶³⁸ It would seem, as can be seen below, the bursaries at Aberdeen created the first year cohort.

Table 7 (a) Bajan (Junior Class) Enrolment at Aberdeen 1800-1859⁶³⁹

<i>Year</i>	<i>King's College</i>	<i>Marischal</i>
1800	33	34
1810	33	56
1820	76	59
1830	75	53
1840	45	41
1850	92	53
1859	68	59
Average	60	51

Every year in the nineteenth century, usually towards the end of August, the following notice would appear in Britain's oldest newspaper, the *Aberdeen Journal*.⁶⁴⁰

The Bursary Competition will begin on⁶⁴¹ [a date given in September] Competitors will each, on application receive from the Sacrist a printed schedule which they are required to fill up and return to him [date given] On the Schedule the Competitors will indicate the subject or subjects selected by them ...Candidates for restricted Bursaries must transmit to the Secretary Certificates that they fulfil the conditions

⁶³⁶ Glasgow University Calendar 1844-1845

⁶³⁷ Ibid

⁶³⁸ The University of Edinburgh Calendar for 1858-1859.

⁶³⁹ Source: *Roll of Alumni in Arts of the University and King's College of Aberdeen. 1596-1860*, ed. P. J. Anderson, Aberdeen University Studies No. 1 (1900) pp. 209-210.

⁶⁴⁰ First published 29th December 1747; *The Times* was first published in 1785.

⁶⁴¹ The traditional date was in September but this was altered, by the 1890s, to a day in mid October.

of the Bursary...The Competition Bursaries will be assigned in the University Buildings, Old Aberdeen⁶⁴² on [date given]⁶⁴³ only Competitors whose Names are in the Order of Merit or their representatives being allowed to be present. Any Competitor not appearing personally, or by representative, to accept a Bursary when offered to him shall be held as declining, and the Bursary so offered to him will fall to the next in order qualified for it.

This created a familiar annual pageant in the life of the city:

By the time we arrived, the quadrangle was dotted with groups of students. The competitors for the day easily recognised by the books under their arms and the rolls of paper in their hands...Gradually the numbers increased until the whole square was comfortably filled with students in all stages of advancement...suddenly a loud cheer arose from a group that had been standing near the entrance to the quadrangle. This attracting the attention of all a rush was made to the quarter. Owing however to the greatness of the crowd it was impossible to make out what it was, but...the crowd opened and showed me a little fellow, a mere boy, staggering along under the weight of a huge 'Ainsworth' Dictionary of the old style that was strapped to his back.⁶⁴⁴...All the northern counties had sent their quota.⁶⁴⁵

This was the scene Principal Geddes described as 'the tribes setting their faces to go up to Shiloh, to inaugurate another Northern Olympiad'.⁶⁴⁶ At stake in the Bursary Competition were awards that ranged in value from £35 per annum to those worth £8 a year; thus even the most modest award would cover the annual course fees with a little over. It is extremely difficult to establish how many entered for these examinations, but there are two

⁶⁴² i.e. King's College.

⁶⁴³ Usually 7-10 days after the Competition.

⁶⁴⁴ This Latin Dictionary it seems was the only textbook allowed into the examination; by the 1860s, it appears, no books were allowed.

⁶⁴⁵ Maclean pp. 24-34.

⁶⁴⁶ W. Keith Leask *Introduction Life in a Northern University* (1917).

press reports, one from 1890, stating that there were 245 entrants and another from 1895, which states there were 168 candidates that year.⁶⁴⁷

The examinees then had to complete three papers including one option from a list of three 'Divisions':

1 English Prose to be translated into Latin, 'the Version' (400 marks)

2 Algebra and Geometry (400 marks)

3 And one from the following

(a) Higher Latin, in 1884 the set texts were Horace, Odes Book III and Cicero *Pro Archia* and *De Amicitia* (200 marks)

(b) Higher Greek Euripides *Medea*, Herodotus Book IX (200 marks)⁶⁴⁸

(c) English: Chaucer and Macaulay (200 marks)

(d) French (200 marks)

(e) German (200 marks)

(f) Chemistry (200 marks)

(g) Zoology and Botany (200 marks).

At this distance in time it is difficult to determine what the standards applied were like, but there exists at least one fleeting reference as to just what was the standard for success: in 1890 Principal Geddes speaking to those who had been successful in the examination, noted that the man, Thomas Bruce (Robert Gordon's College, Aberdeen) who had come first out of the 245 entrants, had scored 930 marks out of a possible 1,000. The Principal then went on to note that '94 had obtained 60%'.⁶⁴⁹ Glimpses too are sometimes given of the Competition's catchment area and the background of the would-be bursars:

Of the competitors, apart from those belonging to the city, 23 hail from the county of Aberdeen; 16 from Banff; seven from Elgin; five from Inverness; three each

⁶⁴⁷ *Aberdeen Journal* October 27th 1890 p.6 October 18th 1895 p.6.

⁶⁴⁸ The same Latin and Greek authors were selected in the following year but with different texts *Pro Sestio*, *Odes* Book, *Hecuba* and the same book of Herodotus. There was however the addition of Virgil Book VII. Calendar 1884-1885 p. 136.

⁶⁴⁹ *Aberdeen Journal* 27th October 1890 p. 6.

from Kincardine and Orkney; two from Ross-shire; and one each from Perth, Forfar, Sutherland, and Lewis. Of the 168 competitors, 19 have lost their fathers. The professions of their fathers are various. A good many are clergymen and teachers; and there are farmers, crofters, auctioneers, masons, farm labourers, paper makers, seamen, merchants, blacksmiths &c. Several of the competitors were born in China and some in India.⁶⁵⁰

Thus the mechanics of the Bursary Competition can be crudely pieced together: the numbers, schooling, their age,⁶⁵¹ the structure of the examinations, set books and a little about the marking scheme. Those who were successful in the Competition received their award in two instalments, provided they had made satisfactory progress, in February and April. At the heart of the Competition was 'the Version'; this was the essential skill: to turn a passage of usually Augustan English prose into Latin of the purest kind. One victim recalled, even after more than 50 years, what such errors meant: Peter Giles, the Master of Emmanuel College and Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, told members of the Scottish Classical Association in 1930 that:

I can remember wondering (in 1878) in the vague way schoolboys do, whether the perpetration of a 'maxie' might not be 'the sin against the Holy Ghost for which there is no forgiveness'.⁶⁵²

A week to ten days after the Aberdeen Bursary Competition the *Journal* would print the Order of Merit, giving not just names and ranking but also the school attended by the successful competitors. Finally the paper would print, two to three days later, the names of those who had accepted the bursaries offered.⁶⁵³

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid 14th October 1895.

⁶⁵¹ Fourteen was the minimum age.

⁶⁵² Presidential Address, *Scottish Classical Association: Proceedings 1929-1930* Edinburgh. (1931) p. 92. The speech was given on 25th October at Marischal College.

⁶⁵³ The handful who did not accept a bursary did so probably for one of two reasons: they had secured a more lucrative scholarship elsewhere or they had no need of the funding but wanted to prove themselves in this the most public of contests. Thus in the 1883 Competition 7 declined the bursary out of 91 offered.

A Theme for Fiction: The Novel and the University

Such was the importance of the Aberdeen Bursary Competition that it helped spawn a distinct genre in Victorian Scottish literature: the Aberdonian *Bildungsroman*:

A literary genre grew up which stressed the contrast of red gown and grey granite, the humble social origins of the students, the austere competitive intellectual ethos symbolised by the system of entrance bursaries, and the struggle with poverty in lonely lodgings.⁶⁵⁴

Three writers who helped promote this category were George MacDonald, W. G. D. Stables and Neil Maclean. Macdonald, was a graduate of King's College, 1840-1845, and gained his place there by winning a Fullarton Bursary which gave him £14 per annum. He became, after moving to London, one of the most prolific of Victorian writers⁶⁵⁵ and also Professor of English Literature at Bedford College. His circle of friends included Robert Browning, 'Lewis Carroll', Ruskin and Tennyson. His first three novels, *David Elginbrod* (1863), *Alec Forbes* (1865) and *Robert Falconer* (1868) are all thinly disguised autobiographies of the young writer. All three contain what were to become stock features in this literary form: the able but impoverished young man growing up in pastoral Aberdeenshire, the kindly dominie, the physical struggle to gain a university place, the central place of the Presbyterian faith in this landscape and the presence of death often at an early age.

William Gordon Stables (1840-1910) gained his medical degree from Marischal College and then embarked on a career as a naval surgeon. He came ashore in 1875 and began a successful career as a journalist and novelist, writing over 130 books, largely adventure stories aimed at young boys.⁶⁵⁶ He did however use his own experiences, as an undergraduate at Aberdeen, to create two novels: *Twixt School and College: A Tale of Self Reliance* (1890) and *From Ploughshare to Pulpit: A Tale of the Battle of Life* (1895). In the

⁶⁵⁴ R. D. Anderson Introduction, *The Student Community at Aberdeen 1860-1939* AUP (1988) p.3

⁶⁵⁵ In 1893 a ten volume collected edition of his works, excluding his novels, was published. He died in 1905 aged 81.

⁶⁵⁶ He was a regular contributor to the *Boy's Own Paper*.

former, the central character, Fred, describes his life at Aberdeen living in an attic which cost three and six per week. There is a very obvious description of Professor Maclure:

an Englishman but had a strong affection for all things Scottish and above all the poems of Burns. These he often read to the students.⁶⁵⁷

The novel ends with the hero married to his childhood sweetheart and an established as a popular rural minister. Much darker in many ways is his later novel *From Ploughshare to Pulpit*: here we meet early on the central character Sandie Macrae, a shepherd who after the day's work is done retires to his straw loft

in the darkest, dreariest night of winter you might have found him here his bonnet pulled down over his ears, a Scottish plaid rolled round his chest and a horse rug over his knees, deep in the learned intricacies of Juvenal, Horace, Homer or Livy, or translating English Caesar he considered too simple, but Cicero in his grand Orations was truly a delight.⁶⁵⁸

The 'Great Competition' is described, but Stables clearly indicates that cheating took place in the Bursary Examination, 'one student was helping another friend by cribbing from a friend'.⁶⁵⁹ After the examination Sandie wanders into the town and dockside and discovers a suicide has taken place: one of the Bursary candidates, Herbert Grant, realising he has failed, takes his life. 'Dear Father and Mother I have failed to take a bursary. When your eyes shall fall upon this I shall be dead' reads the suicide note.⁶⁶⁰ Yet, as the title suggests, all ends well for Sandie as a minister of the Kirk.

The most popular of these Aberdeen stories of student life appears to have been Neil Maclean's *Life at a Northern University*, which was first published in 1874 and went through four editions by 1917. The popularity of this book may be in part due to the detailed description of student life, both academic and social. Maclean's description of the Bursary Competition has already been referred to, but he also details the celebrations, in

⁶⁵⁷ *Twist School and College* 1901 edition p. 310

⁶⁵⁸ *From Ploughshare to Pulpit* (1895) pp. 22-23

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid* p. 100

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid* p. 109

the first week in February, when the Bursary payments are made: whisky, student songs and [all male] dancing. The portrait of student life is far from sentimental: like Stables, Maclean describes disapprovingly the fact that cheating regularly takes place and is undetected and he is also highly critical of some of the teaching. One teacher who comes in for particular attack is Dr Hugh Macpherson, Professor of Greek who, after 1844, employed a deputy. The sentimental and melodramatic core of the work is the description of the consumptive student, Robert Macleod, who wins the final year prizes in Mathematics and Moral Philosophy but makes himself mortally ill in the process. His dying wish is that they:

Bury me within sight of the old college tower. It is a fancy, but I should like the sound of that old cracked bell should occasionally boom over me...Farewell!⁶⁶¹

The first important fictional portrait of teachers and taught in nineteenth century Scottish literature, was created, almost inevitably, by Sir Walter Scott. In *Old Mortality* (1816) he presents in the opening chapter a description of the parish dominie:

There is one individual who partakes of the relief afforded by the moment of demission...I mean the teacher himself, who stunned by the hum, and suffocated with the closeness of his schoolroom, has spent the whole day (himself against the host) in controlling petulance, exciting indifference to action, striving to enlighten stupidity, and labouring to soften obstinacy; and whose very powers of intellect have been confounded by hearing the same dull lesson repeated a hundred times by rote, and only varied by the various blunders of the reciters. Even the flowers of classic genius, which his solitary fancy is most gratified, have been rendered, degraded in his imagination, by their connection with tears, with errors, and with punishment; so that the Eclogues of Virgil and Odes of Horace are each inseparably

⁶⁶¹ This is geographically just possible; there is a graveyard in King's Road near the College.

allied in association with the sullen figure, and the monotonous recitation of some blubbering school boy.⁶⁶²

Here in miniature is the locus classicus of this Scottish worthy: kindly, learned, patient and toiling away at the Classical authors in a small rural school. This is a very far cry from the boarding school of the English Midlands presented by Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857). Scott's creation became the template that was to be used most famously, or perhaps notoriously, by the writers of the 'Kailyard School' in the 1890s.⁶⁶³ The three authors most usually associated with the Kailyard School are J. M. Barrie (1860-1937), Samuel Rutherford Crockett (1859-1914) and John Watson (1850-1907) who wrote under the name of Ian Maclaren; for the purposes of this chapter Barrie's early work is not relevant but the other two authors, both Edinburgh graduates and both Ministers in the Free Church, do merit attention. Crockett's most successful collection of short stories, *The Stickit Minister*,⁶⁶⁴ was published in 1893 and dedicated to Robert Louis Stevenson. The title story deals with Robert Fraser, who was a Divinity student at Edinburgh, but when diagnosed with consumption leaves his studies and tends the family farm, and so is able to support his younger brother, Henry, in his medical studies at the same university. In order to secure a practice for Henry the farm is mortgaged but the young brother knows none of this, and the village all believe Robert had failed in his studies at university. He is, in the story, a dying man and the point is underlined by Crockett noting his:

white forehead with blue veins channelling it, a damp, heavy lock of black hair clinging to it as in Severn's picture of John Keats on his deathbed.⁶⁶⁵

Then there is the inevitable story about the dominie: *The Tragedy of Duncan Duncanson, Schoolmaster*, who was once a Minister but was ejected by the Presbytery due to his

⁶⁶² *Old Mortality* (Oxford World Classics, 1993) pp. 25-26. Scott describes the Scottish universities too in his novels: Glasgow in *Guy Mannering*; St Andrews in *Heart of Midlothian* and Edinburgh in *Redgauntlet*.

⁶⁶³ The name derives from the fact that one of the most successful novels of this school, *Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush* (1895) quoted the couplet 'There grows a bonnie brier bush in our kail-yard, And white are the blossoms on't in our kail-yard'. This fact was seized upon by a (very hostile) reviewer W. H. Millar in the *New Review* who entitled his piece 'The Literature of the Kailyard'.

⁶⁶⁴ Stickit means without a parish i.e. qualified but not licensed to preach.

⁶⁶⁵ *The Stickit Minister and some Common Men* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1915) p. 8.

alcoholism and then becomes the parish schoolmaster. Duncan still fights the demons but produces the scholarship boys:

But no such scholars went up from three counties⁶⁶⁶ as those who matriculated straight from the hedge school of the parish of Dullarg during the reign of the deposed minister of the Shaws.⁶⁶⁷

The most successful of the Kailyard authors in the 1890s was ‘Ian Maclaren’ [Rev. Jon Watson] whose *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1895) went through nine editions and sold 60,000 copies in its first year; by 1907 its sales in Britain and the USA were close to ‘three quarters of a million’.⁶⁶⁸ It is, like Crockett’s most popular work, a collection of short sketches that was first published in the Nonconformist newspaper the *British Weekly* but with a greater unity because the stories revolve around seven figures all living in the village of Drumtochty. The first and most famous of these ‘characters’ appears in the opening section, ‘Domsie’, and is George Howe the original ‘lad o’ pairts’. This term was coined by Maclaren and has since moved into the mainstream of the language; there was of course in the Kailyard stories no ‘lassie o’ pairts’. Domsie is the schoolmaster in the village who had ‘an unerring scent for “pairts” in his ‘laddies’.⁶⁶⁹ His sagacity is recognised by the whole village:

‘Five and thirty years have I been minister at Drumtochty’ the Doctor used to say at school examinations, ‘and we have never wanted a student at the University, and while Domsie Jamieson lives we never shall’.⁶⁷⁰

Domsie’s delight was in finding a pupil who was one good in Latin ; the teacher spends his days ‘racing through Caesar, stalking him behind irregular verbs, baiting traps with tit-

⁶⁶⁶ Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway.

⁶⁶⁷ *The Stickit Minister* p 97.

⁶⁶⁸ E. Anderson ‘The Kailyard Revisited’, *Nineteenth Century Scottish Fiction* ed. I. Campbell (Manchester, 1979) p. 130.

⁶⁶⁹ I. Maclaren *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*. (1895) p .9.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 9.

bits of Virgil'.⁶⁷¹ All recognise George's potential and, 'There was just one single ambition in those humble homes, to have one of its members at college.'

Three Defenders of the Classics: Melvin, Geddes and Harrower

In the nineteenth century three public figures in the north east took it as their special duty to defend the classics: James Melvin, William Duguid Geddes and John Harrower. Their careers also indicate the inter-connectedness of life at the Northern University. Melvin, a graduate of Marischal, became in 1816 a teacher and then in 1826 Rector of Aberdeen Grammar School, and in 1848 he appointed Geddes as his assistant. On the death of Melvin in 1853 Geddes was appointed Rector of the Grammar School and two years later was appointed Professor of Greek at King's College, a post he held for 30 years; he thereafter became Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Aberdeen until his death in 1900, aged 72. John Harrower was educated at Aberdeen and Pembroke College, Oxford, and after working as an Assistant at Glasgow, was appointed Professor of Greek at Aberdeen in 1886. The following year he married Geddes' only daughter, Rachel, and he continued in post until his death in 1933 aged 76. Thus three figures, intimately connected by academic ties dominate the period from 1822 until 1933.

Dr James Melvin was perhaps the nearest Scotland came to producing a native version of his English contemporary, Dr Arnold; 'Over all the North Melvin reigned supreme.'⁶⁷² He was born in 1794 in Aberdeen, the son 'of poor parents'.⁶⁷³ He attended Byron's old school, Aberdeen Grammar School, and in 1819 came first in the Bursary Competition for Marischal College. After graduation he worked as an usher at a private school in Udney, near Aberdeen, and was in 1822 appointed under-master at Aberdeen Grammar School. In 1826, despite being the youngest master at the school, he was appointed Rector. He had, said his memorialist:

⁶⁷¹ Ibid, pp.10-11.

⁶⁷² Leask p. xiv.

⁶⁷³ David Masson., *James Melvin, Rector of the Grammar School of Aberdeen: A Sketch* Aberdeen Centenary Committee (1895) p. 23. This was a limited edition of 250 copies.

in public competition, won the unanimous appointment; and on the 24th of April in that year-in one of those assemblies of the city magistrates, city clergy, college professors, and other dignitaries...he was installed, at the age of thirty-two into the post which was to be his till his death. The office may have been worth £250 a year.⁶⁷⁴

He died in 1853:

On Monday the 27th June he was in his place at the school; but on that day fainted from exhaustion, and had to be carried home. The next day, Tuesday the 28th he died in his house in Belmont Street, aged fifty-nine years.⁶⁷⁵

Melvin's stature was based on his achievements as a grammarian but, more especially, as a very able and efficient classical master. He published, in 1822, a revision of Watt's *Latin Grammar*. This worked he revised considerably for a second edition which appeared two years later. In the Preface to this later edition he pays tribute to 'the learned and accurate Ruddiman' who was of course a native of the north east. Melvin notes, however, that Ruddiman's 'excellent Grammar' was 'wholly written in Latin, and that many teachers objected to its length' and these are the reasons for his edition, for 'otherwise the present work (would not) have been undertaken'. He issues a caveat against another standard text in Scottish schools, Ainsworth's *Latin Dictionary*:

I regret that I have had occasion to differ so often from the Dictionary commonly used in our schools, which though certainly a meritorious and useful production, will, on strict examination, be found in contain many inaccuracies.⁶⁷⁶

Melvin's fame in Scotland rested on his ability over 30 years in preparing boys for the Version in the Bursary Examination. Each year he would be responsible for the 150 boys that made up the two senior classes, the IVth and Vth Forms. These pupils were called

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 44. Belmont Street was in Melvin's day a few hundred yards from the school.

⁶⁷⁶ James Melvin *Latin Grammar, Supplementary to the Rudiments containing Rules in Latin Verse for Etymology and Prosody with Explanations and Notes in English to Which Is Added an Appropriate Vocabulary*, Preface pp. iv-v (1824) Interestingly in such a competitive market this book was published in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and London.

either ‘Alumni’, i.e. regular scholars at the school, or ‘Extraneans’, those who had joined the class usually for the ‘last quarter’, the last term before the Bursary Competition in October. A similar, but more expensive, scheme prevailed at Shrewsbury under Kennedy where boys were prepared for the Cambridge Entrance Examinations. The fees at Aberdeen Grammar School were ten shillings and sixpence per quarter, but exceptions could be made:

Dr Patrick Dun, Principal of Marischal College, who in 1634, mortified the lands of Ferryhill in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen...It is provided by Dr Dun’s deed that any scholar bringing a sufficient testimonial of poverty shall be taught Latin gratis.⁶⁷⁷

The problem Melvin faced was that no text book existed that could provide multiple examples of graduated exercises in order to train his pupils to the high standard demanded by the Bursary Examination. He created what became known as ‘Melvin’s versions’: graded exercises which illustrated some of the linguistic problems of converting English prose into correct, ‘golden’ Latin but these passage also imparted knowledge of Rome, its history and customs:

In these versions into Latin, as in the translations from the Latin, closeness to the original was imperative-no fraudulent ‘giving the spirit of the original’ so as to elude the difficulty presented by the letter, was tolerated for a moment....Every year he prepared about a hundred versions, so that altogether he must have left in manuscript between two and three thousand.⁶⁷⁸

At the Grammar School two entire days a week were devoted to this work and three exercises a week were set: two completed in the classroom and the other at home. It is estimated that Melvin in his time at the Grammar School must have created in the region of

⁶⁷⁷ *New Statistical Account of Scotland, Volume XIII: Aberdeen* (1845) pp. 43-44.

⁶⁷⁸ Masson (1895) pp.37-39.

3,000 different exercises of this nature.⁶⁷⁹ One distinguished former pupil of Melvin's, David Masson,⁶⁸⁰ has left a description of how the Rector went about marking the boys' work:

The system of marking was peculiar. You were classed, not by your positive merits of ingenuity, elegance or such like, but, as in the world itself, by your freedom from faults or illegalities. There were three grades of error: the *minimus*, or as we called it the *minie* which counted as 1, and which included misspellings, wrong choices of words &c; in the *medius* or *medie* which counted as 2 and included false tenses and other slips; and the *maximus* or *maxie* which counted as 4, and included wrong genders, a glaring indicative for a subjunctive &c. There might, in a single word, be even (horrible event!) a double *maxie*, or a combination of *maxie* and *medie*, or *maxie* and *minie*. On a *maxie* in the version of a good scholar Melvin was always cuttingly severe. 'Ut.. dixit' [that...is said]: he would say, underscoring the...words in a sentence...(but) if between two versions coequal in respect of freedom from fault was any positive merit of elegance allowed to decide the superiority; and if, among two or three versions of the first-faction boys that were passes as *sine errore*, one was declared *sine errore elegantissime* [Extremely elegant, without error], you may fancy whether the top-boy that owned it did not feel like a peacock. But when Melvin dictated his own Latin next day, to be written in our version-books after the English, then the difference between *our* best and *his* ordinary would be apparent.⁶⁸¹

This appears to be the system of marking adopted in the Bursary Competition at least at Marischal College.

In 1825 he was able to combine his duties at the Grammar School with the position of Assistant in Humanity at Marischal College. When the Chair of Humanity was created at

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 39 The last Version he ever dictated survives from June 27th 1853, the day before his death *ibid*, pp 100-102.

⁶⁸⁰ Masson (1822-1907) after Aberdeen Grammar School he attended Marischal College.

⁶⁸¹ Masson pp. 37-39

Marischal in 1839, it was widely anticipated that Melvin would be appointed, especially as the College had recognised his merits in awarding him the title Doctor of Laws in 1834. He was however passed over in favour of John Stuart Blackie who was then aged thirty and had no teaching experience but did enjoy considerable powerful local political connections. There is evidence that the new Professor and the local Rector enjoyed a rather frosty relationship as Melvin, due to his pre-eminence, was retained as the Assessor in the Bursary Examination.⁶⁸²

Certainly Blackie must have set many teeth on edge in the north east when, in his autobiography, he described his Aberdeen appointment thus:

I must have been a very poor creature indeed if I was not far superior to the schoolmaster. The fact of the matter is Melvin damaged himself even as a scholar by schoolmastering too much.⁶⁸³

He also admits the appointment was 'a Whig job...but not a very bad one.... the old schoolmaster [Melvin was 45, Blackie 30] was passed by and the young literary aspirant put in'.

It has to be said that Melvin's eminence in Victorian Scotland was due in no small part to the unassailable position, it seemed, of Latin in the school and university curriculum. For centuries the Bursary had depended on testing in Latin and Latin alone and even when the Competition was expanded the most important subject in terms of rigour in marking was this language. Melvin was above all else a superb and meticulous tutor to large classes of boys who needed, inexpensively, to acquire the skills to win high marks in the version, 'His method of instruction was certainly most dissimilar [from Rugby's Dr Arnold's] being minute, punctilious and strictly philological.'⁶⁸⁴ Even if a student ignored the Bursary Competition, two years of demanding Latin were required to complete the Arts degree curriculum. Added to this, in the north east, the effects of the examination of parochial

⁶⁸² Melvin seemed to have delighted in correcting Blackie's errors in Latinity.

⁶⁸³ J. S. Blackie *Notes of a Life* (1910) pp. 118-119

⁶⁸⁴ D.N.B. Vol. XII (1912) p. 247, the entry was written was by Thomas Seccombe.

schoolmasters undertaken by the Dick Bequest further underlined the importance of having more than adequate Latin. Indeed the attitude of the Bequest when asked to advise as to whether a school should study Latin or Greek, was to strongly urged the former: 'If limitation of time makes it necessary to choose between Latin and Greek, the former presents paramount claims for preference.'⁶⁸⁵ Unsurprisingly this bias was reflected in the statistics collated by the Bequest: thus in 1852 in the 123 parochial schools that fell within the Bequest's constituency, 803 pupils were studying Latin and 186 Greek.⁶⁸⁶

All these elements served to reinforce the importance of Latin at the expense of Greek.

This language, Greek, was only introduced as a Bursary subject in 1849 and in many schools in the north east as in the rest of Scotland, it was not taught at all. The Bajan Greek class at Aberdeen would be comprised, as in Lushington's or Jebb's Junior Greek at Glasgow or Blackie's at Edinburgh, of many absolute beginners. This made the status of the language extremely parlous in Scotland, and it is quite remarkable that this system did produce noted Greek scholars who were educated and remained within the Scottish education system. One man who certainly falls into this category is William Duguid Geddes. His importance in this study is however in a now little-remembered dispute involving Geddes and Aberdeen's Rector.

This controversy was caused by a series of proposals made by the then Lord Rector of the University, Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, on October 21st 1869, when he chaired the meeting of the University Court. The Rector⁶⁸⁷ was the Liberal MP for Elgin Burghs and, although born locally, had been educated at Edinburgh Academy and Balliol College. Duff's proposals were aimed at reforming the Bursary Examination system and in the process to reduce the pre-eminence of classical languages in this examination. But over

⁶⁸⁵ S. Laurie *Report on Education in the Parochial Schools of the Counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Moray Addressed to the Trustees of the Dick Bequest* Edinburgh (1865) p 139.

⁶⁸⁶ To these figures must be added those studying in burgh grammar schools as these were excluded from applying to the Bequest.

⁶⁸⁷ He was elected in 1866 where his opponent had been George Grote.

and above that the Rector made, in a very public forum, derogatory remarks about the abilities of those studying and qualifying in Latin and Greek at the University:

For Aberdeen to lay herself out for teaching classics would be as absurd as if she were to give up sending strawberries to the markets of the south, and devote her energies to the growth of mangosten. We send out men distinguished in every branch, except classics. Look to India and the Colonies, and every country with which we are connected, and you will find that Aberdeen men are doing hard intellectual work all over the world, but you will hardly find one distinguished in the classics. Classical scholars are almost as rare amongst them as Bengal tigers in our streets.⁶⁸⁸

Duff's comments were reported in the local press. Geddes was clearly infuriated by these dismissive comments and there was then probably no-one better equipped in Scotland in terms of experience or ability to make a public rebuttal. The Professor chose as his forum the opening lecture to the Senior Greek class which first met a week after the Rector had made his comments.

The tradition at Aberdeen was for the opening class of both the Bajan and Senior Greek classes to be addressed by the Professor who gave a *tour d'horizon* of classics in general and Greek in particular. Thus Geddes' apologia was very much within that tradition. He began by noting that Duff's arguments were 'mere assertions' but then comes down to dealing with standards of classical scholarship in England. Knowing full well that the Rector is a product of Balliol, he observes that:

I were to affirm, as has often been affirmed more than once, by men more competent than I to judge than I, that Oxford, for instance, does not produce the highest names in classical scholars. And if asked for my grounds, I might say, as others have said, that Oxford has not produced the highest names in classical scholarship; for these you must go - such is the fact - to Cambridge, where the

⁶⁸⁸ W. D. Geddes *Classical Education in the North of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1869) p. 4.

spolia opima of criticism were won by Bentley, Porson and John W. Donaldson or to Berlin and Leipsic.⁶⁸⁹

Geddes is most insistent that it is not the case that the Oxonian stamp is 'the only coin current in the Agora of classicality'. Then Geddes turns to a familiar theme:

a Scottish youth of eighteen or nineteen who has passed through our course... competes for a scholarship-without which, probably he cannot afford to enter [carries] a great many subjects along with him [and competes with] the English youth [who] has been for eleven or twelve years doing little other than classics.... the whole energy and teaching talent of the English schools is given to classics.⁶⁹⁰

Geddes then moves on to use what was becoming, by the 1860s, an independent yardstick of excellence, the Indian Civil Service Examinations; and here again, despite Latin and Greek counting for so many marks (1500) Aberdeen men had done well and on occasion beating Oxbridge men. He quotes three examples of such success: James Westland [first in 1861], George Smeaton [first in 1863] and his own brother James Geddes [second in 1860], all three of whom he had taught at Aberdeen Grammar School.

Geddes went on to show how Aberdeen's reputation in the classical scholarship had led her graduates to be currently occupying important rectorships: Ayr Academy, Royal High School of Edinburgh, Glasgow Academy, Dollar Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School. Then he pointed to the discrimination that exists concerning some senior appointments in Scottish education; the rectorships he had mentioned are 'positions open to Scotchmen'. There are he said three schools where:

the management is so framed that no Scotchman who has not passed through Oxford or Cambridge has a chance of preferment. These, I presume I may name without offence: they are the Rectorship of Edinburgh Academy [this was of course Duff's old school], the Mastership of Fettes College, and the Wardenship of Glenalmond.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid, pp.6-7.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid, p.12-13.

Magnus Magnusson in his history of Edinburgh Academy very usefully gives the salaries of these posts in 1901: the Rector of Edinburgh Academy £1,200 plus a house, the Warden of Glenalmond £1,300 plus a house, coal and lighting worth about another £200-£300 and highest paid of all, the Master of Fettes £1,500 plus a house and 'extras'.⁶⁹¹ What Geddes was saying, none too obliquely, was that the three most lucrative rectorships in Scotland, with salaries three or four times the norm in the ancient burgh schools,⁶⁹² were effectively out of bounds for non Oxbridge trained Scots. Geddes' assertion was perfectly correct, indeed the situation was worse than he described: in the case of Glenalmond between foundation in 1847 and 1929 no Scot was appointed to the Wardenship; Edinburgh Academy, since its foundation in 1824, has appointed Scots to the Rectorship but only those who meet the criteria set out by Geddes. Fettes College did not appoint a Scot until 1958, eighty eight years after their foundation: the appointee was Ian Macintosh a product of Inverness Academy, University of Aberdeen and Trinity College, Cambridge.⁶⁹³

Geddes' philippic is about much more than a proud Scot's disdain for an example of Balliol's 'effortless superiority':⁶⁹⁴ his aim it seems is much more than just to reply to Duff's ill-informed remarks; it is to show what, in his eyes, Duff represents: an ill-informed view of Scottish education from one who is the product of a private education at Edinburgh Academy and who has also been exposed to the intellectual prejudices of Jowett's Balliol.

Geddes notes, too, the great wealth of the English private schools: two of them, Winchester and Eton, had an annual income in excess of all Scotland's ancient universities combined.⁶⁹⁵ He concluded his lecture by observing that in Scotland:

⁶⁹¹ *The Clackan and the Slate* (1974) p. 267. The Headmaster of Fettes' salary was on a par with the High Master of St Paul's.

⁶⁹² For example when the Rectorship of Ayr Academy was advertised in 1883, the salary was 'about £500.' This would be a top end of such vacancies

⁶⁹³ See *The Glenalmond Register 1847-1929*, (Edinburgh, 1929), R. Philp. *A Keen Wind Blows. The Story of Fettes College*. (1998)

⁶⁹⁴ The phrase was coined by Herbert Asquith.

⁶⁹⁵ He gave as Eton's income from landed property as £20,569 plus 37 livings in her exclusive gift worth £10,000 together with 'a probable accession of income from lands of £10,000. Winchester has an income of £17,622 plus livings worth £3,888 and the: 'lion's share in one of the wealthiest houses in Oxford, New

we have no fellowships without duties or cathedral stalls with fat livings...Again the early age at which Scotsman have to launch themselves into life to sink or swim, without the opportunity to float about in the delicious haven of a fellowship, almost *ad libitum* - this represses much noble rage, and makes the blood often run poor and cold.

Finally he returns to the Lord Rector:

The scions of the Scottish nobility, as a rule, go elsewhere for their education; they seem to shrink from rubbing shoulders with the sons of the people in the people's schools; they proceed to England without taking Scotland in their way, and return, it may be, to accept our dignities, and tell us we have no scholarship in Scotland.

It was clearly a bravura performance: he presents a vivid manifesto for the Scottish classical tradition.

The only reason the lecture has survived is because Geddes had it printed at his own expense and as well as the text supplies six appendices supplying statistical support for his arguments. In the first of these he outlines Duff's plans for revising the Bursary Examination: in essence the Rector wants the marks awarded to the 'Version' to be quartered and the marks redistribute to the other existing papers with the addition of 'easy questions' on grammar and history included in the Greek paper, and 'easy questions' on British History in the English Grammar and Composition paper. Geddes sees this as dilution and an invitation to cram whilst begging for a definition of 'easy.' He defends the 'Version' as a unique Aberdeen institution and something which: 'has been in some form or another, *ante memoriam hominum* [before the memory of men] in use in the University.' Interestingly he argues it was the Version, due to its rigour, that attracted, over centuries, mortifications and endowments. The exercise teaches students to

College.' Scotland's universities receive about £25,900 a year 'but of this sum £10,000 is not an endowment but an annual Government grant' He also says that the Scottish burgh schools have at utmost £3,000 a year Geddes (1869) p. 24

discriminate, combine and compare ideas and forms of expression, in a manner that no other exercise as yet discovered, applicable to the age at which it comes to be studied in the north-eastern schools, can approach.⁶⁹⁶

Then Geddes points out that what should be happening in British education is that English schools should emulate Scottish ones and not vice versa:

It deserves remark that while composition in Latin verse is going down in England, and composition in Latin prose is rising in the public estimation there, it is hard that the little of the latter which we have cultivated in Scotland should be despised by those who know little or nothing of the working of the system.⁶⁹⁷

The other appendices give details of: examination successes achieved by Aberdonian graduates in the ICS examinations, the rising tide of Scottish scholarship and a plea that Westminster take seriously the proper funding of Scotland's burgh schools which, if granted, would raise standards, especially in Greek, by making teaching posts in such institutions more attractive.

Rectors come and rectors go but Aberdeen professors, especially of Greek, abide: Duff finished his tenure as Rector in 1872 and left Scotland to become Governor of Madras; meanwhile Geddes, after thirty years as Professor, became Principal of the University, the first layman to do so.

Geddes published one other work towards the end of his life which was an elegy on a passing Scottish classical tradition: in 1882 *Flosculi Graeci Boreales* [*Little Greek Flowers of the North*] A which consists of over seventy Greek versions from the classics of English and Latin literature. It is the work of Geddes himself mostly but there are contributions from some of his former Greek students⁶⁹⁸ it represents a fitting companion volume to the various editions of Melvin's *Versions* that were then beginning to appear in print in Scotland. Geddes begins with a sorrowing preface:

⁶⁹⁶ Geddes (1869) p. 32.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid p.33.

⁶⁹⁸ Two of them were Peter Giles and John Strachan, the former became Master of Emmanuel and the latter Professor of Philology at Manchester.

Lectori Benevolo...

At nos Scoti hodierni, tantorum luminum tardi sectatores, videmur, neglectis Graecis Litteris, Latinas quoque mancas ac dimidiatas reliquisse, adeo ut multis iisque emunctae naris hominibus ipsae Latinae Litterae vilescent. Nec immerito: haud enim poterunt florere Latinae Litterae, nisi ibidem simul fovetur fax illa sempiterna, quae, Athenis accensa, Latinum ipsum atque Europam totumque orbem terrarium irradiavit. Vale.⁶⁹⁹

[To the dear readers.....

But we Scots of today, the laggard followers of such great luminaries, seem to have left both Greek and Latin literature feeble and diminished, so that to many, and those men of refined taste, Latin literature itself seems to grow coarse. And not without reason: for Latin literature will not be able to flourish, unless that torch is kept alight within it which, brought from Athens, has shed its light over Latin itself, Europe and the whole inhabited world.]

Yet the collection begins on a defiantly Scottish note with Greek versions of the nation's anthems of war and peace: *Scots Wha Hae* (Βρῦσσου Παργγεαμ) and *A Man's a Man for A' That* (Πενια Δικαια) and he closes the work with an original composition which returns to his initial lament: *Ingruente in Academiis Ingenti Procella Barbarica Graecas Litteras e Scotia Quasi Expulsura* [Assault on the great seats of learning by the barbarian storm and the near expulsion of Greek letters from Scotland].

Geddes's successor in the Greek chair was his son-in-law John Harrower, and from the very start of his tenure of the Greek chair he was confronted with two serious issues both beyond his professorial control: the decision to make Greek optional for university entrance in 1892 and the introduction of a national exam, the Higher School Leaving Certificate, as a Scottish university entrance examination; the former step was to erode, of

⁶⁹⁹ J. Harrower, *Fosculi Graeci Boreales: Series Nova* (Aberdeen, 1907) p. vii, Harrower edited a second edition published in 1907.

course, even further the parlous situation of Greek in Scotland and it was the latter development that in Harrower's view produced a debased, examination-driven system of teaching. On the second point it could be said that any examination based system, including the Bursary Competition, will have this effect in the classroom: Melvin was very good at preparing students for the Version and little time, except in passing, was spent on Roman life and manners. Harrower noted a little wryly at a meeting of the Scottish Classical Association in March 1903:

We are at least outside the category of the 'many teachers of Greek and Latin' who we are told by the editor of the *Classical Review* 'fail sufficiently to realise that Classics are now being pressed on one side by the advance of Science, on the other by that of Modern Languages, and that the latter are its most dangerous opponents.' Here in Scotland we are not allowed to be blind to this even if we wished it, and to us who have been holding the citadel for years before Mr Postgate spoke, the intelligence that we are actually under siege comes a trifle late in the day.⁷⁰⁰

At the foundation meeting of this Association in November 1902 he lamented the tyranny of the 'unseen' created by the examination system:

the pernicious results of the Unseens in schools... Students come up with the idea that Classics was an abstract science more like mathematical training than humanism.⁷⁰¹

Harrower's reputation was based almost exclusively on his abilities as a teacher and on the results his graduates achieved, over many years, in public competitive examinations. One of his former students, Sir Thomas Taylor, who later became Professor of Law and then Principal of Aberdeen University, has left a description of what it was like to be in the Bajan Greek class, on the first day, in October 1917:

⁷⁰⁰ The Teaching of Greek *Classical Association of Scotland: Proceedings 1902-1903* Edinburgh (1903) p. 98.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid p. 65

The ante-room door opens and in comes the Professor, tall and portly with an air of mingled arrogance and benignity....we have heard the fame of him with our ears, and now here he is in the flesh, 'Hawa', the greatest teacher of Greek in the country...He is an old Tory hating innovations, openly contemptuous of those who spend their time 'playing with bottles', of 'soft Options' (which means everything except Classics and Mathematics), and many of his colleagues including the Professor of Humanity.⁷⁰² The study of Greek, its promotion and defence, is the grand loyalty of his life. For this no pains are too great...Let any Bajan think that accents don't matter and he will be told that 'correct accentuation is the mark of a scholarly mind'. Mistakes in prose or verse are chidden in the tone grown-ups used to little children. 'Oh dear, dear we're not clever today. Quite a superfluous piece of naughtiness Mr Taylor'...He has many pet aversions, especially radicals of all kinds. 'Euripides...lovely lyrics gentlemen, but the man could no more write dramas than my cat.'⁷⁰³

The Harrower Papers, some 150 boxes deposited at Aberdeen University, very much confirm the portrait painted by Taylor.⁷⁰⁴ These Papers include all the inaugural lectures given to the Bajan class, neatly written out in full, on 16 cm by 20 cm cards. His aim in these first encounters was, he explained, 'to spend the first hour together in a lecture of a general character'.⁷⁰⁵ His contempt for other disciplines was, as Taylor suggests, more than palpable:

It must not be forgotten that Greek literature and not our own rather barbaric

Anglo-Saxon is the true progenitor of all that is great in our own. The professional

⁷⁰² Alexander Souter (1911-1937) Graduate of Aberdeen (First), Ferguson Scholar (Classics), in 1893, Gonville and Caius, Cambridge, Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis, Mansfield College, Oxford 1903-1911. Vice Chancellor of Aberdeen 1935-1936.

⁷⁰³ Edwards p. 421.

⁷⁰⁴ Unfortunately there does not appear to be an index at Aberdeen Special Collections available to researchers.

⁷⁰⁵ *Address to the Bajan Class 1921-1922* Aberdeen Special Collections (ASC) U567-116.

student of English is a mere charlatan, a trader in second-hand knowledge, if he cannot read the Greek writers in their own tongue.⁷⁰⁶

He encouraged his class by telling them what they could achieve:

Four years ago a student entered this class who had passed only on the lower grade in Greek. He ended by gaining a First Class Honours in Classics and passing last year into the I.C.S. with Greek as one of his subjects. It is the greatest blunder in the world to see things *a priori*.⁷⁰⁷

He also is at great pains to remind his new students of the tradition they represent and how it differs proudly from England: 'In Scottish, as contrasted with English Universities, Honours men and Pass men are taught together in the first year's class.'⁷⁰⁸ Harrower was only too aware of the probable career most of his graduates would have and how they must keep the faith with the old, Scottish ways of teaching Greek, so he talked to his first Bajan class in 1915 in the following terms:

Many of you will become teachers and with you will lie a burden in carrying on the tradition of the past. It is clear that the Scottish Education Department is holding up an entirely false ideal of school teaching in Greek and certainly an ideal that is at variance with what has long been provided in the north of Scotland. Two years ago it was announced that the Greek pupils in the best schools by the end of a course of two or at most three years have been over half a dozen books of Homer, two or three plays and a representative selection from Plato, Thucydides and Demosthenes. I have some experience of school teaching⁷⁰⁹ of Greek and nearly thirty years of University teaching on the subject, I have to say regarding this

⁷⁰⁶ *Address to the Greek Graduation Class 1923-1924* p.p. 10-11 ASC U567-117.

⁷⁰⁷ *Address to the Bajan Class 1909-1910* p. 14 ASC U567 101.

⁷⁰⁸ *Address to the Graduate Class 1921-1922* ASC U567-116.

⁷⁰⁹ It is unclear what this means but it may explain the gaps in his biography between Aberdeen, Glasgow and Oxford.

statement that this theory is impossible, if any regard is paid to accuracy, which is the first condition of sound work in any kind of teaching.⁷¹⁰

This is Harrower's manifesto, his call to arms and it complements Geddes' apologia *Classical Education in the North of Scotland*. Harrower's concern was that the badly taught could by means of cribs and rote learning pass the examination which was based on an over-ambitious list of set texts, where such a pupil would come to grief in the unseen translation. In an article he wrote for the *Aberdeen University Review*, in 1918, he gave chapter and verse:

[A student] had come to plead mercy because failure meant the loss of his whole curriculum, and because in his half-dozen previous attempts he had experienced the cruellest of ill-luck: 'No sooner', he said, without the faintest consciousness of the irony of his words, 'No sooner do I get up a list of words for a "Siege" passage, than the bit turns out to be a "Naval Battle" or the "Character of a Statesman" '. Is anything more needed to prove the rottenness of the whole thing?⁷¹¹

In these lecture notes it is possible to see how Harrower enlivened difficult texts like Thucydides, thus for example as the second year of the Great War he insisted to the Junior Class:

The parallel is too obvious to escape the dullest, Ancient Sparta lives again in modern Germany in its system ridden constitution, its military caste, its oppression of the individual, its secretiveness, its low standard of honour, its treachery, its cruelty.⁷¹²

In the same lecture he sees the corruption of Athens after the wars with Macedonia as due to 'the new type of politician. Politics had become a trade, men joined a party for a career.' He also comments, in a later lecture, on the economy of the Greek historian's style when

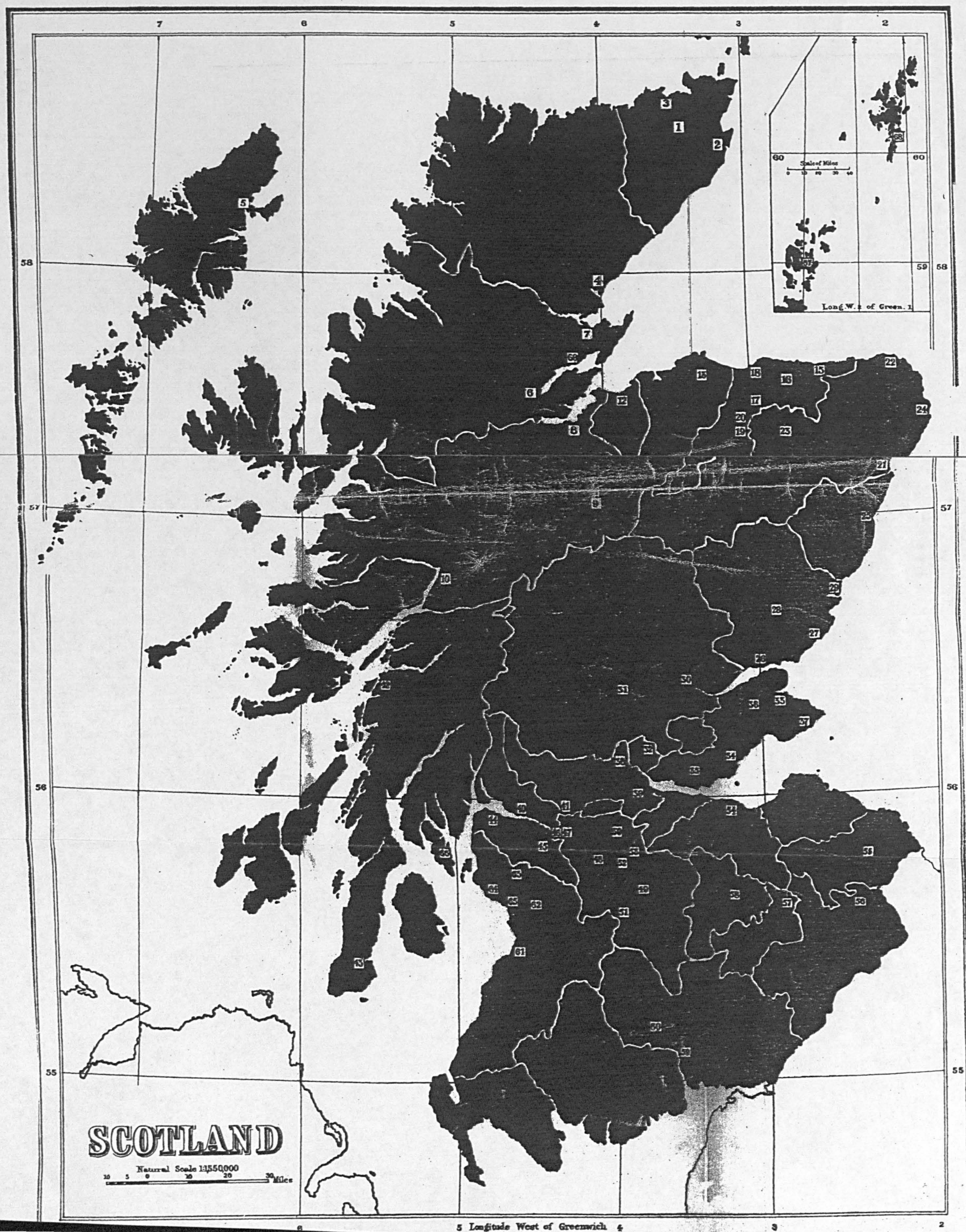
⁷¹⁰ ASC U567-109.

⁷¹¹ *Then and Now* AUR 1918 ABS Shelf Mark E4EVL.

⁷¹² ASC U567 109.

Table 7 (b) Harrower's 1912 Map of the Greekless Areas of Scotland

NOTE.—The numbered squares indicate the centres in which Greek is still taught in Scotland.



describing the retreat from Syracuse, unlike the style of Burke, 'facts set before us to tell themselves without a scrap of rhetorical tinsel or ornamental phrase.'⁷¹³

In 1912 Harrower, at his own expense, published the results of a survey he had conducted as *A Map of the Greekless Areas of Scotland*.⁷¹⁴ It is in essence a 'then and now' portrait: 'The object of this map is to bring home to all persons interested the extent to which the study of Greek has disappeared in Scotland.'⁷¹⁵

⁷¹³ *Lectures Graduate Class 1925-1926* ASC U567-119.

⁷¹⁴ The publishers Aberdeen University Press who were, despite their name, private printers.

⁷¹⁵ 'Notes on the Map of the Greekless Areas in Scotland' p. 1

Key to the 1912 Map of the Greekless Areas of Scotland

1 Halkirk	24 Peterhead	47 Glasgow
2 Wick	25 Stonehaven	48 Hamilton
3 Thurso	26 Dundee	49 Lanark
4 Golspie	27 Arbroath	50 Airdrie
5 Stornoway	28 Forfar	51 Uddingston
6 Dingwall	29 Montrose	52 Wishaw
7 Tain	30 Perth	53 Dalziel
8 Inverness	31 Crieff	54 Edinburgh
9 Kingussie	32 Dollar	55 Duns
10 Fort William	33 St Andrews	56 Kelso
11 Glen Urquhart	34 Kirkcaldy	57 Galshiels
12 Nairn	35 Dunfermline	58 Peebles
13 Elgin	36 Cupar	59 Dumfries
14 Grantown	37 Anstruther	60 Closeburn
15 Banff	38 Stirling	61 Ayr
16 Fordyce	39 Falkirk	62 Kilmarnock
17 Keith	40 Dumbarton	63 Beith
18 Buckie	41 Lenzie	64 Ardrossan
19 Mortlach	42 Oban	65 Irvine
20 Aberlour	43 Campeltown	66 Rothesay
21 Aberdeen	44 Greenock	67 Kirkwall
22 Fraserburgh	45 Paisley	68 Lerwick
23 Huntly	46 Govan	69 Invergordon

Needless to say, given the title, Harrower presents the information as if reciting the last rites over his discipline: of 253 schools devoted to higher learning in Scotland⁷¹⁶ only 83 offer Greek. In schools like the Royal High School of Edinburgh it is 'almost extinct' and in Aberdeenshire 'that could once boast a Greek scholars in almost every village' there are now only six schools teaching the subject'.⁷¹⁷ He then considers the area he knows best, the Northern Area (north of Argyll and Perthshire) and contrasts the current situation where there are in total 27 Greek teaching schools. He then presents an obituary list, over 100 parishes are named that had up until 1906 schools that taught Greek: it is a very effective rhetorical device for the parishes named are in some of the most remote parts of Scotland but still they had the means to teach the ancient language. The official explanation is this is simply the result of centralisation and that Greek is now taught more efficiently in the larger population centres. He insists that this is untrue as the numbers are declining in real terms, even in the large population centres. The causes he believes are several: the decision to make it optional in the Scottish degree programme; to give, in three out of the four University Bursary Competitions equal merit to Modern Languages, which he calls 'soft options', as to Greek. The one exception, St Andrews, where 'Greek counts twice as much as French' has produced an unsurprising consequence:

in the St Andrews University area, Forfarshire and Fifeshire for example, the numbers of school pupils taking Greek have kept up better than in any other part of Scotland.⁷¹⁸

It has to be said that Harrower omits to mention, in his commentary on his map, the most remarkable fact of all: twenty years after the abolition of Greek as a compulsory university arts subject, the language is still be taught in many schools outwith the main population centres. Sixty nine centres are listed and twenty nine are north of the Central Belt: in the

⁷¹⁶ He exempts private schools like Fettes and Edinburgh Academy as they are not publicly funded bodies.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid pp 2-3.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid p 8.

Highlands, the Hebrides and Orkney Greek has survived. The numbers must have been small, but the remarkable thing is, just as the 1826 Census revealed [Table 4 (a), p. 73], the ancient language survived against all the odds.

Harrower then widens his argument and considers the consequences of this decline and lists the damaging effects for the Scottish nation and its future due to this decay in learning. Shrewdly he poses this very pertinent question: 'What is to happen to the [Greekless] students should they desire to enter the ministry?' The effects of the decline in Greek, he says, are being felt in the Divinity Halls of both the Established and Free Presbyterian Churches. 'A Greekless and unlettered clergy would be a disgrace to Scotland.' This was a clever move because it shifted the argument over the status of Greek from being a dispute over scholarly texts amongst professors, to contemplating the stark future that a man who held a cure of souls in any parish in Scotland, or Ireland or in the Empire might not be able to understand a word of the Septuagint or be able to follow with any comprehension a line or even a word in the standard *Commentaries* on Romans, Matthew or St John. Harrower then predicts that the Scottish universities would be the only Scottish centres where Greek could be learnt, doing the job that the schools once did. Finally, and this issue would have particular resonance with his Aberdonian audience especially his students, that by denying the Scottish pupil access to Greek would mean they would be unable to compete in the great public examinations:

Classics is still one of the two great avenues to a career in the Civil Service of India and this country. It is possible for a classical candidate to make 3,200 marks out of 6,000 in Classics alone...Twenty years ago a boy with a turn for Classics could have been started on the right path in almost any parish within the northern area. Is it not a scandal that there should be whole counties of Scotland where Greek is not

being taught and where therefore the sons of the poor are debarred from one of the greatest chances in life?⁷¹⁹

He concludes by laying the blame fairly and squarely on the 'fumbling and experimental policy of the Scotch Education Department.' In a seven page commentary on his survey Harrower makes an eloquent case, made all the more telling by the statistics which he says darkly were 'not easily obtainable'.

The most noted modern historian of this period in Scottish education, R. D. Anderson, has suggested that Harrower is one of the architects of a highly romanticised view of nineteenth century university education:

After the First World War a myth began to be woven round the old university curriculum, as it had been earlier around the rural school - the figure of John Harrower, indeed, linked the two. The appearance of this type of nostalgic myth was a warning sign which indicated a loss of vitality.⁷²⁰

This is a little unjust to Harrower, for his protest, in a *Map of the Greekless Areas of Scotland*, over the erosion of Greek in schools in the Northern area, whilst its importance was still enshrined in the major British public examinations, was surely a valid and not a 'nostalgic' one.

Harrower, indeed, was under few illusions about the old Scottish dispensation; in June 1924, aged 67, he addressed the London Aberdeen University Club Dinner in the following terms:

When I first joined the Senatus 38 years ago two of my most distinguished colleagues had been victims of a system which enabled a man to accept a chair and then after delivering an inaugural lecture appoint a *locum tenens* and draw the revenues for the rest of his natural life. One of these colleagues had occupied this humbler position for many years, longer than he had been professor, and yet had difficulty in reaching the minimum qualification for retirement. That sort of thing

⁷¹⁹ Ibid p. 6.

⁷²⁰ R. D. Anderson *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* (1983) p. 343.

gave Professors a bad name in the country used to smile politely if you said that the work was hard⁷²¹

Not much of a 'nostalgic myth' here on an occasion which, one imagines, craved for it.

Harrower was always a keen promoter of 'the cause' throughout his life: he was greatly involved in the extra-mural movement, and in 1921 he introduced a 'Greek without tears' course at the university⁷²². He also organised productions, at the Aberdeen Music Hall, of performances of his translations from the Greek: *Antigone* (1919), *Agamemnon* and *Choephora* (1920), then finally *Oedipus Tyrannus* (1922). He also embraced the new medium of radio and was one of the first classicists to be heard on the wireless; he was first heard over the airwaves on Friday 16th January 1925 in the *Schools Transmission* slot (3.30-5.00) on *The Importance of Classics in School Education*. Harrower was to broadcast again a few days later, January 26th, to presumably a larger evening audience on *Greek Theatre*. The first British classicist ever to appear in front of the BBC microphone seems to have been a fellow Scot, Sir George Macdonald, who was heard in the Edinburgh area on the evening of Monday December 15th 1924 talking about *The Romans in Scotland*.⁷²³

No 'Cathedral Stalls with Fat Livings': The Road South from Aberdeen

The problem facing any classics graduate leaving the Aberdeen or any other of the ancient Scottish universities was: where to seek employment? If he was to stay in Scotland the choice seems to have been the following: to work in a university, to become a schoolmaster, to become a minister in the Kirk or to become an advocate. There were, after 1860, only four chairs in Greek or in Humanity and usually a vacancy would only occur on the death of the holder. To work as an assistant seems to have been a very temporary

⁷²¹ ASC U567-118.

⁷²² 'the prototype of all the Classical Studies or Classical Civilization courses which have proliferated up and down the land in schools and universities in the second half of the twentieth century. Over forty years later one could still find old pupils of his in adult evening classes, eager to read again the plays they had performed with Harrower in his student days' Edwards p. 424.

⁷²³ *Radio Times* January 9th Harrower's broadcast was for the Aberdeen area only.

occupation, the post often lasting only a year. It was it seems the route to somewhere else, as very few assistants, like Dunbar at Edinburgh, made the journey directly from assistant to the chair.⁷²⁴ There were certainly always vacancies for school masters, but the fate of Melvin showed what could await even the most able; local fame but little fortune and the contempt of a man like Blackie.⁷²⁵ In the north east of Scotland competition for any post as parochial dominie was fierce, in the rural districts, due to the financial appeal of the Dick Bequest. As to the Kirk, the preparation for presenting oneself to a presbytery required four more years in one of the Divinity Halls, and even then there was no guarantee of a cure.⁷²⁶ The legal profession was dominated by Edinburgh, where the highest of Scotland's courts met, but this too was an occupation that belonged largely to those who came from families with means.

No wonder then that Scots cast envious eyes towards the job opportunities provided by the creation of new metropolitan universities in England and Wales: London (1826), Durham (1832), Manchester (1851), Leeds (1874), Bristol (1876) Reading (1894), University of Wales (1893), Sheffield (1897).⁷²⁷ All these new institutions would have a Department of Greek and another of Latin; they were yearning after instant respectability; so Latin and Greek must be taught. Then too there were the new universities of the Empire: in India: Madras, Bombay and Calcutta (all 1857); in Canada: McGill (1821) and Toronto (1827); in Australia: Sydney (1850); and in New Zealand, Otago (1869) and finally, in South Africa, Cape Town (1829). But in all these institutions, the *imprimatur* of either Oxford or Cambridge would always win the day in terms of appointments to posts in the classics. How to achieve that academic, English benediction?

⁷²⁴ Nothing seems to have been written about the work of assistants in the Classics Departments of Scotland's ancient universities. In most cases the post seemed to last for a year only.

⁷²⁵ 'I must have been a very poor creature indeed if I was not far superior to the schoolmaster.' J. S. Blackie, *Notes of a Life* (1910) p.119. A contemptible remark.

⁷²⁶ *Trinity College Glasgow, Souvenir of the Union 1856-1929*, Glasgow (1930) shows that in the period 1856 to 1900 twenty-one of those studying at this a Free Church Divinity Hall did not find livings.

⁷²⁷ This is a simplification of a very complex process: Manchester was known as Owens College in 1851 and the University of Wales begins with Aberystwyth in 1872. However the overall point remains true, all these institutions represented opportunities to the ambitious Scot.

The Road South: The Snell Exhibition and the Ferguson Scholarship

The two most famous nineteenth century routes from Scotland to Oxbridge were the Snell Exhibition and the Ferguson Scholarship. The attractions of the Snell were obvious; it offered the successful applicants a funded place at the 'Scot's College', Balliol. The history of the Snell has however been dogged with controversy, as one recent academic reviewer rather sourly observed the Exhibition is 'a notorious cabal, the Balliol-Glasgow mafia'.⁷²⁸ The sombre historian of this award, W. Innes Addison, wearily concedes:

truly the Snell trust was born to trouble as the sparks fly upward and its funds and patronage have from first to last generated in divers quarters feelings of envy which could only find their proper vent in the legal arenas of the country.⁷²⁹

The root of the many disputes concerning the Snell is simply stated: the difference between the terms of John Snell's bequest and the administration of it, thereafter by the Universities of Glasgow and Balliol. Snell, an Ayrshire man, made his fortune as Seal Bearer to the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal in the reign of King Charles II. Snell in his will of 1679 directed that five trustees [Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, Provost of Queen's College, the Master of Balliol and the President of St John's College] admit scholars

borne and educated in Scotland, who shall each of them have spent three years in the Colledge of Glasgow, in that Kingdome, or one year there, and two at the least in some other colledge in that Kingdom.⁷³⁰

That it would seem was clear enough but Snell's will further stipulates a penalty of five hundred pounds...if hee shall not enter into holy orders; and if he or they shall at any tyme after such his or their entring and admission take or accept of any

⁷²⁸ Oswyn Murray TLS February 9th 2007. In the same he noted that the Snell was currently Balliol's best endowed award.

⁷²⁹ W Innes Addison *The Snell Exhibitions from the University of Glasgow to Balliol College, Oxford*. Glasgow (1901) p.25.

⁷³⁰ Innes p. 199.

spiritual promotion, benefice or other such preferment whatsoever, within the kingdome of England or the dominion of Wales.⁷³¹

Snell clearly wanted Exhibitioners to be Oxford educated, enter the Church of England and then return to Scotland to promote the cause of Episcopalianism; this wish expressed more than 30 year before the Act of Union was never realised. Presbyterian Scotland would not permit the encouragement of Episcopalianism within its borders and certainly not in one of the bulwarks of the faith: the University that had educated John Knox. From the outset this single major condition was ignored by both Glasgow and Balliol but this did not prevent repeated legal challenges from Episcopalian interests. The Snell was however a Glasgow monopoly in all but name unlike the Ferguson:

The Ferguson Scholarship is the Blue Ribbon of Classical Scholarship in Scotland, and from the time of its institution Aberdeen has a record for this distinction which puts it ahead of all the other Universities.⁷³²

These are the words of George Ramsay speaking in 1914 at an event celebrating Harrower's 28 years in the Chair of Greek. The Ferguson, since it was open to all, was seen as the premier competition for Scottish classics and the names of the successful applicants is a roll call of the most outstanding Scottish classical scholars: J. W. Mackail (1878), George Macdonald (1883), W. R. Hardie (1881), A. W. Mair (1894), W. M. Calder (1903) and Nan Dunbar (1950) were all noted winners of the Ferguson Scholarship in Classics. The scholarship was established by another Ayrshire man, John Ferguson, who at his death in 1856 left a sum of £50,000 'to and for the benefit, and among such Charitable, Educational and Benevolent Societies and Institutions in Scotland as his Trustees should select'.⁷³³ Their decision was to use these funds to establish an annual scholarship. What distinguished the Ferguson from all other similar endowments was that its aim was to

⁷³¹ Ibid 199-200.

⁷³² *Proceedings on the occasion of the presentation to the University of Aberdeen of the portrait of John Harrower Dec. 19th 1914* (Privately printed, 1915) p. 17

⁷³³ *The Ferguson Scholars 1861-1955* Compiled by William Douglas Glasgow (1951) p. 20

reward scholarship; the competition was open, independent and inter-collegiate. The Scholarship was first offered in 1861 with two scholarships:

one for the greatest proficiency in Classics and Mathematics, including Natural Philosophy; the other for the greatest proficiency in Classics and Mental Sciences, including Logic, Metaphysics and Ethic.⁷³⁴

The value of the award was to be £100 per annum given over 2 years, based on the candidates' examination marks: initially the maximum number of marks was 1,500 but a minimum of 900 marks had to be achieved in order to be entitled to a scholarship. The examinations were to be held in Glasgow in October and in the first decade these examinations:

Shall be conducted orally or in writing at the discretion of the Examinators, these men to be recruited from the Scottish professoriate or other persons of literary eminence.

The examiners were to serve for two years only and were forbidden from examining their own students. Any case of conduct 'unbecoming of a scholar and a gentleman will incur forfeiture of the Scholarship.' The rules also took account of those who missed a scholarship but submitted good work:

It is intended to give a gratuity to one or more of the unsuccessful Competitors who, in the opinion of the Trustees and Examiners, shall have taken a distinguished position in the Examination, and which may, in certain circumstances, be continued for more than one year.⁷³⁵

The set books for the examination were to be issued at least six months before the diet.

The initial classics book list, for 1861, makes daunting reading.

⁷³⁴ *Ferguson Scholarship Examination Questions 1861-1881*. Glasgow University bound copy.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*

Table 7 (c) Ferguson Scholarship: 1861 Classics Set Texts

Latin (750 marks)	Greek (750 marks)
Virgil	<i>Iliad</i> Books XII-XXIV
Horace	Herodotus Books I-III
Propertius	Thucydides Books V & VI
Livy Books I-X	Aeschylus <i>Agamemnon</i>
Tacitus <i>Histories</i> Books I -III	Sophocles <i>Philoctetes, Trachinae</i>
Cicero <i>Epp. Ad Fam</i> I-III	Euripides <i>Ion, Bacchae</i>

To these set texts there were added papers dealing with ‘Latin Prose, Greek Prose Composition, and Questions on History and Literature’.

John Harrower made a very careful study of these results each year and was very definitely of the view that proportionately Aberdeen did far better in the Ferguson than any of the other Scottish universities, a fact that was included in the University’s annual Calendar. In the period 1861-1910 the statistics are: St Andrews 13, Aberdeen 49, Glasgow 32 and Edinburgh 55; of these Aberdeen scholarships 21 were for the Classics Scholarship.⁷³⁶ Both Glasgow and Edinburgh had a far higher student population than Aberdeen; hence there is considerable weight to Harrower’s argument. The numbers who competed for this award annually ranged between 10 and 20; those who were successful

⁷³⁶ J. Harrower *Ferguson Scholarship* ASC Accession No E488V.

usually, but not inevitably, went on to Oxford or Cambridge: the most favoured colleges being Balliol and Trinity College, Cambridge respectively. A few continued their studies in Europe, for example the remarkable Thomas Kikup, the son of a shepherd who won the Ferguson in 1871 and continued his studies in Berlin, Tübingen, Geneva and Paris. A glittering career was guaranteed for most Ferguson Scholars; amongst their ranks were fourteen Vice-Chancellors; eighteen who were ennobled; four Moderators of the Kirk and one Lord Chancellor (R. B. Haldane).

In this the most competitive of arenas Aberdeen students had a formidable reputation. It is hardly surprising that when women were allowed entry to the scholarship the first to win was a student from Aberdeen, Jessie Murdoch (1904, Philosophy) the daughter of a carpenter.

For a variety of reasons Aberdeen was indeed a place apart: the number and antiquity of the Bursaries; the standards of school teaching encouraged by the Dick Bequest; the celebration of the northern 'the lad o' pairts' in fiction and autobiography; the close ties between the community; the university's tradition of professorial appointments in the classics and finally the Ferguson Scholarship where the record of Aberdeen students was outstanding.

The final institution to be considered is the University of St Andrews, which for most of the nineteenth century seemed doomed to extinction but remarkably recovered, and its recovery was due in no small part to the involvement of women, for the first time, in Scottish higher education.

Chapter Eight

'On not knowing Greek': Women and the Classics in Scotland

Every school, every college which aims at higher education for women, puts Classics and Mathematics in the forefront ... the educational feature of the age has been a throwing down of the intellectual barriers between man and woman, a throwing open to women of intelligence aims and ambitions heretofore confined to men; and what seems curious at first sight is this, that the Classics have been finding their way into the female curriculum at the very moment when there seemed likely to be a slipping out, in whole or in part, of the male curriculum.

Professor George Ramsay *Should Women Study the Classics* (1891)⁷³⁷

The most significant development that affected the Scottish universities in the 1890s was the battle over the admission of women to undergraduate courses. This chapter will be an attempt to address these issues: to describe the way access to university was reluctantly ceded to women; to explore what classical education was offered to women before and after this event; to examine the foundation of Scotland's first modern university at Dundee and finally to explore the employment opportunities for women before and after a university education.

An initial problem which complicates any analysis is, of course, the difference between the schooling system in Scotland, and that in England; so that when an author states, in what is a very detailed analysis of the English situation:

The great divide was between elementary and secondary schools... The debate about woman's education was therefore a debate about what was appropriate for 'ladies', the woman of the middle and upper class⁷³⁸

⁷³⁷ *Opening Lecture of the Arts Course at Queen Margaret College, Glasgow. November 3rd 1891* ('Printed by Request') pp. 4-5.

The term used here, 'the great divide', in a Scottish context is meaningless for most of the nineteenth century

The most obvious starting point is legislative, the 1880s witnessed various attempts at further reform of the nation's universities, reform which often embraced the cause of the admission of women. Bills were brought forward in 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886 and 1887, all failed to reach the statute book. The reason for these repeated failures was twofold: the universities were divided on what reforms they sought but more importantly Scottish affairs were at the margin in Westminster without the support of English members any legislation would fail.⁷³⁹ The Universities (Scotland) Act 1889 opened Scotland's universities to women and created a panel of Commissioners who, after consultation with the universities, issued in 1892 the Ordinances which set out the details of this change. The figures in Table 8 (a) show the gradual but fundamental changes wrought by female admissions but also show that there was not an identical pattern at each of the four ancient universities.

⁷³⁸ G. Sutherland 'The Movement for Higher Education of Woman: its Social and Intellectual Context in England and Wales c. 1840-1880' in *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain. Essays Presented to A.F. Thompson* .ed. P.J. Waller Sussex (1987) p. 94.

⁷³⁹ This was a perennial complaint throughout the century. Lord Cockburn, writing in 1836, observed 'When the Lord Advocate left Scotland last February he took the drafts or schemes of a shoal of bills touching Scotland with him. The session will be over in about a week, and not one of the more difficult and important of these bills has been passed....An angel could not have carried these bills...Thus Scottish legislation was pushed aside; and for this the only remedy was a separate Scottish department which could act with the authority of the Cabinet.' G. W.T. Omond *The Lord Advocates of Scotland. Second Series 1834-1880*. (1914) pp 31-32. This matter was eventually addressed, in 1885, with the revival of an ancient post, the Secretary for Scotland.

**Table 8 (a) Matriculation Figures: Arts Faculties⁷⁴⁰ of Scottish Universities
1892-1914⁷⁴¹**

	Glasgow		Edinburgh		Aberdeen		St Andrews		Dundee College⁷⁴²	
<i>Session</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
1892-93	928				375		151	19	53	9
1893-94	773	104	773		328		138	33	73	23
1894-95	668	142	737		293	20	124	28	49	15
1895-96	598	165	688		272	34	127	36	65	43
1896-97	558	162	564	183	274	42	129	39	67	48
1897-98	575	175	567	181	279	64	150	70	82	20
1898-99	606	213	609	190	298	83	168	73	78	27
1899-00	627	254	629	194	277	94	128	81	118	31
1900-01	657	271	624	210	270	98	134	87	119	31
1901-02	651	269	639	247	277	115	118	90	119	59
1902-03	671	271	593	271	266	117	154	106	88	74
1903-04	668	310	595	257	245	130	137	91	105	85
1904-05	673	342	585	291	239	138	134	88	80	100
1905-06	661	428	614	338	242	165	141	111	109	77
1906-07	686	511	606	404	268	185	139	109	110	88
1907-08	671	552	596	498	260	232	145	126	120	84
1908-09	688	577	620	504	302	235	128	144	121	104
1909-10	719	523	674	530	305	246	141	141	129	89
1910-11	754	552	703	565	289	242	126	151	148	71
1911-12	747	547	712	579	298	271	124	238	134	64
1912-13	726	502	712	510	297	272	106	113	137	64
1913-14	776	598	681	500	289	272	109	106	138	60

Several patterns do emerge from the above table: clearly the admission of women to Arts courses dramatically enlarged the size of all the Scottish Arts Faculties, for example Glasgow University's Arts Faculty grew by 68% between 1892 and 1914. The figures also reveal just how parlous was the state of student enrolment at St Andrews in the 1890s: this may perhaps be one explanation as to why this university so actively recruited women to their courses; it was a matter of survival. It also shows how vital the University College of Dundee was to St Andrews in improving the university's overall annual matriculation figures.

⁷⁴⁰ By this time all the Scottish universities were divided internally into five faculties: Divinity [named Theology at Glasgow], Arts, Science, Law and Medicine. The largest faculty in all universities, save one, was the Arts Faculty; the exception being the Medical Faculty at Edinburgh where matriculation numbers in the period averaged 1,300.

⁷⁴¹ Sources: Matriculation Rolls and Annual Statistical Returns.

⁷⁴² University College of Dundee was opened its doors in 1883. From the start it admitted women; in 1883 there were 19 women in a total matriculated population of 155. Its initial remit was to teach Science and Medicine subjects absent from the curriculum of the ancient university. It became an independent university in 1967. The figures given here are the total of *all* of Dundee's matriculated students; it has not been possible due to the nature of the matriculation records to give a further breakdown.

Before considering individual institutions it may be useful to sound a note of caution. The admission of women as students and staff to Scotland's universities has not been an uninterrupted narrative of progress and emancipation: in 1960 Elizabeth Farmer⁷⁴³ came first in the Bursary Competition for St Andrews and was awarded £60 a year but the men who came after her in the list were eligible for the £100 per annum provided by the Harkness Bursaries; later still in 1985 a female classicist at one of Scotland's ancient universities was put under considerable pressure to resign by the Principal, as she had announced her intention to marry. She retained her post but only after the determined intervention of the Dean of the Faculty.⁷⁴⁴

Aberdeen Ladies Educational Association

A recent academic investigation into the topic of Victorian women and the Scottish universities is Lindy Moore's *Bajanellas and Semilinas*,⁷⁴⁵ an analysis of the situation that prevailed at Aberdeen between 1860 and 1920. In many ways the book is a model of its kind, exploiting a very wide range of published and unpublished material, but also incorporating, very importantly, oral testimony from women who were Aberdeen students in the early years of the last century.⁷⁴⁶ Moore's researches at Aberdeen reveal, in detail, the paradigm that was to be followed at all the other Scottish universities: a powerful pressure group is formed in the 1860s by women who by birth, marriage or wealth wield great influence in the local community; an alliance is then formed with one or more professors in the Arts Faculty and/or the Faculty of Medicine who are *simpatico* to 'the cause'; a series of academic lectures are offered to local middle class ladies; the evidence of the success of this venture fuels a campaign for formal recognition of attendance at these lectures by means of a recognised university examination; and finally the results

⁷⁴³ Later Elizabeth Craik., in 1976 she was appointed Professor of Greek at St Andrews, succeeding Sir Kenneth Dover.

⁷⁴⁴ Private communication, December 2007.

⁷⁴⁵ L. Moore *Banjellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen and the Education of Women 1860-1920* (Aberdeen, 1991)

⁷⁴⁶ Moore perhaps sometimes grounds her argument on quite shaky foundations: for example, in trying to illustrate the views of conservative males, she uses evidence from 'a private magazine largely written by teenage girls' *The Castle Sceptre*, and quotes as her source, 'The father who acted as editor' (p. 25).

from these examinations are used as evidence that women have the ability to cope with the demands of a degree programme.

Programmes of lectures given to women by Aberdeen professorial staff began in 1854 when Professor Gray gave a series of lectures, under the aegis of the Mechanics' Institute, on Natural Philosophy. By the next decade lectures had been offered to the public, male and female, on chemistry and on the New Testament. Here as elsewhere in Scotland's cities these lecture programmes seemed to be aimed largely at an audience who had the income, leisure and appetite for current advances in academic and especially scientific, learning. At this initial stage Latin and Greek are conspicuous nationally by their absence, the reason being that neither language lent itself to a one-off programme lasting perhaps ten or twelve weeks.

Just as was to happen in Glasgow and Edinburgh a pressure group was formed in the city, the Aberdeen Ladies' Educational Association, which met for the first time in 1877.

Initially a programme of lectures was offered, taught by professors and lasting twenty weeks; this was raised to 80 lectures in 1881-1882, but this was still short of the standard 100 for undergraduate courses. Despite this fact, the debate gradually shifted to discussing the abilities displayed by women in these classes compared to the professors' male charges at the university. What was sought by the ladies who attended was, of course some form of validation for their efforts in such classes: this took the form of local examinations under the aegis of the local university: Edinburgh began the process in 1864, followed by Glasgow and St Andrews. Aberdeen eventually introduced its own set of examinations in 1880 with candidates entering at either Preliminary, Ordinary or Senior level. Lindy Moore's researches give the following pattern of success in these examinations between 1880 and 1911 when the scheme was ended.

Table 8 (b) Pass Rates Aberdeen University Local Examination 1880-1911⁷⁴⁷

	Girls	Boys
Preliminary	4,972	330
Junior	2,160	191
Senior	3,000	21

One reason for the dominance of girls in this examination was that they were barred in the 1880s from entering the Bursary Competition: the National School Leaving Certificate was introduced in 1888, but as it has been shown in an Chapter 6 this examination was initially only offered in 'Higher Class' Scottish schools.

The surviving evidence suggests that the career that a university degree would provide for most women , who lacked the funds to support themselves through the longer medical degree course, was teaching. Aberdeen conducted a survey of graduate employment between 1901 and 1921 out of a total of 1,627 students, 185 had entered medicine as a career but 1,101 had entered education: 11% as opposed to 68%.⁷⁴⁸ The pattern was the same amongst Glasgow women graduates a survey conducted by the Senate of employment between 1894 and 1914, which showed that 192 out of a total of 1336 had become doctors but 663 had become teachers; 50% as opposed to 14%.⁷⁴⁹ The fact that teaching was seen as an appropriate career for a single woman and the Scottish tradition of having an all graduate teaching profession, especially in the north east, lent further weight to the campaign for admission.

Eleven women attended undergraduate courses in October 1892 as private students and two years later twenty matriculated students. As can be seen from Table 8 (a) their numbers helped to swell the numbers in the compulsory Latin and optional Greek classes that formed part of the General degree. A change introduced in 1892, and much lamented by Davie, was the introduction of honours degrees; it is therefore possible from the 1890s

⁷⁴⁷ Moore (1991) p. 13

⁷⁴⁸ T. Watt *Roll of Graduates 1901-1925* Appendix A (Aberdeen, 1935), p 943

⁷⁴⁹ Sheila Hamilton 'Women and the Scottish Universities 1869-1939, Ph.D. (University of Edinburgh, 1987) p. 395.

to plot which specialisms were selected by both male and female matriculated students.

The figures for graduates reveal that in 1901, 1911 and 1921 Science was the most popular choice for men and females initially selected Modern Languages (1901) but thereafter followed the same path as the men, Classics was the next most popular amongst the Aberdeen males, whereas for women it was the second most popular choice in 1901 but thereafter lost ground to other subjects like Philosophy, English and Languages.⁷⁵⁰

In some ways it could be argued that Aberdeen was in the vanguard of change on the issue of university education for women: it was the only Scottish university to immediately open all its courses to women, and the first Scottish female university appointment was made at Aberdeen, in 1903 Johanna Forbes was a Latin Assistant. The university also ignored the issue which so troubled other universities: the creation of residential accommodation for female students. The University was perfectly happy for these women, in the normal Scottish tradition, to live in lodgings or at home. In part this last decision may reflect a mixture of Aberdonian frugality and a common sense approach to the issue: it saved the University considerable spending and lodgings in the city were cheap, possibly the cheapest in any Scottish university town; in 1911 a place could be found for two at 12s 6d a week.

Scotland's Girton: Queen Margaret College

Unlike any of the other Scottish universities, Glasgow was to have, by 1884, a separate college building for women and, after 1890, within the same building a fully equipped medical school exclusively for the female medical students.

At a public meeting in 1877 the Association for the Higher Education of Women in Glasgow and the West of Scotland was founded. The President was Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Louise, the Marchioness of Lorne; royal or Scottish aristocratic connections were seen as very important in the early days of the fight for emancipation; at

⁷⁵⁰ Moore (1991) p. 45.

Edinburgh the President of a parallel organisation was the Duchess of Argyll.⁷⁵¹ The Secretary to the Glasgow Association was Caroline Jebb, the American wife of the Professor of Greek. In November of that year a new, more formal programme was offered: 'six short courses of lectures on University subjects by University Professors, and two consecutive courses of French literature'. These lectures were given, very significantly, on the University's premises. At the launch of this programme of lectures the Association had the University's printers, James MacLehose, print 2000 copies of the prospectus; 1,500 were mailed to local families who were known to have young daughters, the remaining 500 were kept against any written requests that might be received. It is impossible to be sure about the 1877 list of subjects but within a year the list included mathematics, music, English literature and Latin. What gave the Glasgow Association's proposals greater appeal was the fact that the University of Glasgow's Local Examination, launched in 1877, was from the outset open to women.⁷⁵²

The educational work of the Association was conducted by three methods: the lecture programmes that have already been mentioned, tutorials (Latin, Mathematics and Theory of Music) and, after 1879, by correspondence courses; and it is this last named development that was perhaps of greatest importance and was eventually to become international in nature. The Secretary who was appointed to administer this distance learning programme, which became operative in 1879, was Miss Jane Arthur who:

had an unerring eye in choosing her Tutors ...Among them we may mention the names of men who now (in 1901) hold places of high trust in the educational world, Professors Sonnenschein (Greek and Latin Literature) and Muirhead (Philosophy) of Birmingham, Professor Walker (English and Philosophy) of Lampeter, Professor

⁷⁵¹ Queen Victoria herself was violently opposed to female emancipation. 'This mad, wicked folly of 'Women's Rights.' Letter to Sir Theodore Martin 29th March 1870.

⁷⁵² The dates for the other Scottish Local examinations are: St Andrews 1864, Edinburgh 1877 and Aberdeen 1880.

Mackenzie of Cardiff, Professor Jones (Moral Philosophy) of Glasgow University.⁷⁵³

The correspondence courses were an undoubted success as the enrolment figures that have survived show

Table 8 (c) Glasgow Correspondence Course: 1879-1890 Enrolments⁷⁵⁴

Year	Enrolments
1879-1880	19
1880-1881	266
1881-1882	283
1882-1883	470
1883-1884	372
1884-1885	427
1885-1886	450
1886-1887	401
1887-1888	381
1888-1889	280
1889-1890	282
1890-1891	181

Latin was on offer from the start and the Roll Book of the Association reveals five students taking the subject: the sisters Edgar of Ecclefechan, Miss Grant and Miss Harker of Helensburgh and Miss Johnson of Dumfries. The text books used for Latin were *Edinburgh Academy's Latin Rudiments* and J. B. Allen's *First Latin Exercise Book*.⁷⁵⁵ The first Greek students first appear in the session 1888-1889 when a total of 27 students were

⁷⁵³ Ibid p. 133. All but Sonnenschein were graduates of Glasgow, he was educated at University College London and University College, Oxford. His Glasgow connection was based on his time working as George Ramsay's (Humanity) Assistant and then his very brief period 1881-1882 as Headmaster of Kelvinside Academy 'it was said (he) did not find the schoolwork congenial.' C. H. MacKay *Kelvinside Academy 1878-1978* (Glasgow, 1978) p. 32.

⁷⁵⁴ Source GUA DC233/2/8/23/1. The figures are based on the annual Prospectuses. But no clue is given as to why there was the fourteen fold increase between the first and the second year of this correspondence course.

⁷⁵⁵ *Prospectus* session 1880-1881.

taking both ancient languages.⁷⁵⁶ Correspondence classes were open to men but, they always seemed to have been a minority, for example in 1884-1885 there were 72 men enrolled.

Students who enrolled for one or more of these correspondence courses were provided with a scheme of work, fortnightly essays to be submitted and a book list, the fee per subject appears to be one and a half guineas, £1 11s 6d. By 1900 courses were offered at four levels: Elementary, which was probably aimed at the schools' market; Junior; Senior; and Higher. The appeal of these courses was obvious, as the journalist T. M. Lindsay noted in his column in *Good Works* of December 1879:

The penny post goes everywhere - to the shepherd's sheiling, the far off shooting lodge, remote country parsonage or highland manse...Few know how large a number of English ladies are trying to educate themselves and how eagerly they take advantage of any authoritative scheme for funding and testing their studies.⁷⁵⁷

The appeal of these courses includes not just Britain but the world:

Students have come from the country manse, from the lonely farm house, from the busy city, from the convent, from the green room...Already correspondence pupils from the continent of Europe have joined the Glasgow classes. Turkey has sent one pupil and Smyrna another. Soon pupils from the Cape of Good Hope and from India will join the scheme.⁷⁵⁸

This prophecy was more than fulfilled; the Glasgow Association's Report for 1885-1886 noted that of the 450 students enrolled the majority came not from Scotland but from England and Ireland, a third of the students were Scottish based and the rest came from

⁷⁵⁶GUA DC 233/1/5/1 *Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women. Roll Book*. This book contains details of those enrolled for the lecture programmes and tutorials as well as the correspondence courses.

⁷⁵⁷'Education by Post' *Good Works* December 1879 p 2 GUA DC 233/2/24/4.

⁷⁵⁸Ibid p 8.

countries such as France, Spain, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Russia and the USA.⁷⁵⁹

Thus in Jamaica the local paper, *The Gleaner*, could advise its readers:

The success of the [Glasgow] Classes has been so great that the authorities are desirous of extending their influence to the Colonies. The benefits to be derived are so obvious that we have no hesitation in bringing the Classes conspicuously to the notice of ladies in Jamaica. There are many here who will be glad to know and take full advantage of such a favourable opportunity for self culture. The fees are comparatively small.⁷⁶⁰

It is at this point that one of the key figures of Scottish Victorian philanthropy, Mrs Isabella Elder, enters the narrative. A wealthy woman in her own right, her fortunes were vastly enhanced by the fact that she was the widow of the marine engineer and shipbuilder, John Elder.⁷⁶¹ In 1883 she bought North Park House and grounds, a mansion in the west end of the city and within walking distance of the newly re-sited University, for £12,000, and allowed the Association to use as this as their home rent free. She insisted on attaching one important condition to her gift: she would not hand over the deeds of the house until the Association had raised £20,000 as an endowment fund to cover the running costs for the building that was now renamed Queen Margaret College. The classes offered here included Classics, Mathematics, Physics, Zoology, Botany, Physiology, Geology, Philosophy, English Literature, French, German, Music and Painting. In the same year, 1883, the Association was incorporated under the Companies Act as Queen Margaret's College for the education exclusively of women, governed by a Council of 21, two of whom were appointed by the University's Senate, but without any voting rights.⁷⁶² The

⁷⁵⁹ GUA DC233/2/3/2/1/2.

⁷⁶⁰ n.d. but from internal evidence must be after 1892. GUA DC 233/2/8/3/23/5 p. 5 This is the first of three volumes of press cuttings, mostly from the *Glasgow Herald*, covering the 1890s.

⁷⁶¹ She is estimated to have given away at least £200,000 in her lifetime, C. J. McAlpine *The Lady of Claremont House. Isabella Elder Pioneer and Philanthropist* (Glendaruel, 1997) p. 201. There are several factual errors in this text so caution is advised.

⁷⁶² The full name was Queen Margaret College for the Higher Education of Women.

College opened in January 1885 and the necessary £20,000 was raised by 1891 and true to her word Mrs Elder handed over the deeds of North Park House to the Trustees.

The admission of women to the University created a dilemma for the Trustees of Queen Margaret College: was the College to remain a physically and academically separate institution, was it to close down altogether or was it to seek some form of affiliation or merger with the University? No other Scottish branch of the campaign for educational equality faced a similar dilemma. The course followed by some American colleges like Oberlin (1835), Smith (1875), Bryn Mawr (1885) and Barnard (1889) of being independent female only colleges does not seem to have been seriously considered by the College. The advantages to the University of absorbing Queen Margaret College were obvious: at no cost the legal obligation to accommodate female students could be met, and also importantly, it would gain access to the Endowment Fund. It is clear that Mrs Elder was very anxious that any link with the university should carry the cast iron guarantee that the female students should receive exactly the same standard of teaching as the male students. The female students also seemed divided too on what was the best way forward:

Some of us desired to see University life in Glasgow modelled as closely as possible upon that of the other Scottish Universities, where a separate department for women had never existed, and where the women students rather lacked a centre of intercourse. This might be called the party of progress, and its aim was always to join interests, as far as possible with the larger community of the University students. The other was in comparison a conservative party, seeking to maintain the separate little institutions of Queen Margaret, from a feeling that much good came from the close fellowship of a small college; that ways which suit men do not necessarily suit women students, and that the women would lose more than they could gain, by being swamped in the great numbers of the University.⁷⁶³

⁷⁶³ H M Nimmo 'Queen Margaret College in the Middle Ages', *The Book of the Jubilee 1451-1901* (Glasgow, 1901) pp.149-150.

Few first-hand descriptions appeared to have survived of what it was like, as a female undergraduate, to attend mixed classes in the 1890s. One depiction that has survived was included in the official *Glasgow University Jubilee Book* for 1901 and so perhaps should be treated with some caution:

As will be understood our first admission to the classes at Gilmorehill was a great event. I remember with what courteous precaution we slipped in by a side door of the Humanity class-room to an unoccupied bench in the window, the first time we attended the Honours class, and how for an entire session the Queen Margaret bench in another class was never named in the roll-call, lest we should object to answer to our names. How the Professor distributed the 'absents' we never knew, for though he could be seen counting us daily, he did not know one from another at the close of the session.⁷⁶⁴

Certainly it seems to be the case that by 1900s 'the lassie o' pairts' was making her presence felt in the Scottish university lecture halls. Frances Melville, Warden of University Hall (St Andrews) addressing the Conference of the National Union of Woman Workers of Great Britain and Ireland held in Edinburgh in 1904 was in little doubt:

The Scottish woman student herself is hard to describe, for she conforms to no one type, and belongs to no one class. The same democratic spirit that brings together, in a general academic life, the sons of the crofter, the laird, the tradesman, the minister, the rich man, the poor man, draws the woman student students too, from widely different homes, with widely different ideas.⁷⁶⁵

The *Glasgow University Album (Women)* which covers the matriculation details from 1892 to 1903 does give this view some support: in 1892-1893 131 women were enrolled including the daughters of tea planters, doctors but above all clergymen, by 1899-1900 the roll of 328 includes the daughters of ministers merchants and country gentlemen but also students whose fathers were pastry cooks, railway guards or caretakers. In the latter class

⁷⁶⁴ Nimmo p. 149.

⁷⁶⁵ Conference paper, 'University Education for Women in Scotland'. GUA DC 233/2/24/26.

the daughter of a Bishop, Rhoda Harrison, shared the benches with the daughter of a janitor, Mary Blackhall.⁷⁶⁶ In the same decade the age range was, as with the male classes, very noticeable, ranging from 15 to 40; the eldest being Agnes Robertson who joined the College in 1893 aged 49.⁷⁶⁷ The major stumbling block was of course finance but as R. D. Anderson has noted, help came in the form of the Carnegie Fund: by 1904 50% of all Scottish students and 70% of Arts students were in receipt of some help from the Trust.⁷⁶⁸ The first female students to attend the Arts classes at the University, in 1892, were welcomed in the columns of the weekly student paper, *Glasgow University Magazine*. Interestingly this welcome picked on the topic of ancient Greek and hoped the ladies wouldn't find it too difficult:

When they try you as Jebb used to try me

Can you conjugate *Phero* alway?

And the difference twixt *Heimi* and *Eimi*

Are you sure, dear, you always can say?

Is young M...never into a wax sent

Does old M... never murmur his moan

When you tell 'em the circumflex accent

's Proparoxytone?

Can you Hellenise Wendell as we did,

With some help from 'Liddell and Scott',

And - I wonder if M does as he did-

⁷⁶⁶ It is extremely hard if not impossible to make any meaningful comparisons with say Girton as the background of many of their students was simply unknown e.g. for students between 1869 and 1880 out of 113 cohort 64 of the student's father's occupation is unknown, for Newnham between 1871 and 1880 out of a cohort of 258 the figure for unknown is 216. See Gillian Sutherland 'The Movement for Higher Education of Women: its social and intellectual context in England c 1840-1880' p. 101 in *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain: Essays Presented to A.F. Thompson* ed. P. J. Walker Harvester Books, Sussex (1987) Table 4 p. 104.

⁷⁶⁷ Agnes' father was a farmer in Peebleshire. Not all ladies gave their age. GUA R8/2/1.

⁷⁶⁸ *Education and Opportunity* (1983) p 288.

Nearly always from Richard ⁷⁶⁹a lot?
 Can you skilfully use the enclitic
 Asper Spiritus (always on tho)?
 Ah, is Murray as kindly a critic
 As Jebb long ago?
 Do you read Mark or Luke of a Monday
 From a text that is not authorized?
 Do you take the precaution on Sunday
 With Greek to insert the Revised?
 Have those eyes of yours (whisper dear) really
 Gazed in secret on Butcher or Bohn
 Or the Key-key accursed-that's called Kelly
 E'er rested upon.⁷⁷⁰

The issue of women and learning Greek was discussed over thirty years later by Virginia Woolf: 'It is very vain and foolish to talk of knowing Greek, since in our ignorance we should be at the bottom of any class of schoolboys.'⁷⁷¹ It is possible the ladies at Glasgow demurred: given that Greek was, after 1892, optional but also that a classical language was still compulsory it seems perhaps odd that any female student should have elected to study Greek in preference to Latin. Their reasoning may however have been that in Murray's Greek class there would be many male beginners or near beginners and this offered the opportunity, over the six month session, of a more level 'playing field' than Latin where they would in many cases be usually far behind their male fellow students.⁷⁷² Preparatory

⁷⁶⁹ Jebb.

⁷⁷⁰ A.L.T. 'To the Girls in the Greek Class' *Glasgow University Magazine* January 6th 1892 p. 68 'Young M' will be Gilbert Murray and 'old M' would Alexander Murdoch his assistant whom he inherited from Jebb in 1889.

⁷⁷¹ V. Woolf 'On Not Knowing Greek' *The Common Reader: First Series* (1925) p. 39.

⁷⁷² See Tables 5 (b) and 5 (c).

classes were offered at Queen Margaret but they could not compensate for the three or four years of intensive Latin that the men would have received in their Scottish schooling:

As a consequence of the extremely backward state of our education in these days [the 1890s], the preparatory classes in classics and mathematics were even more important than the degree classes.⁷⁷³

A further reason may have been that Gilbert Murray was a keen and vocal supporter of woman's rights and very anxious, for example, to make the link between Euripides' *Medea*⁷⁷⁴ and the treatment of women in late Victorian Britain. The gap, if gap there was, closed in November 1898 when Helen Rutherford, daughter of a local Glasgow merchant, graduated with First Class Honours in Classics.

The female matriculation figures continued to grow steadily year on year reaching a figure of 1708 in 1931,⁷⁷⁵ by that time, however, very few were attending the women-only classes at the Queen Margaret College. In 1935 the University sold the property to the BBC for the sum of £24, 808 13 s. 3d.⁷⁷⁶

'A Group of Maidens': The Edinburgh Campaign

The Edinburgh campaign had modest beginnings:

In 1865 a group of maidens gathered under the leadership of Sarah Siddons Mair and formed the Edinburgh Essay Society, later named the Ladies' Edinburgh Literary or Debating Society, a Society which for seventy years was a training school for women, their debates preparing them to be excellent public speakers.⁷⁷⁷

The Essay Society produced, in the year of its foundation, a magazine called *The Attempt* which in 1876 became *The Ladies' Edinburgh Magazine* and was clearly used to promote

⁷⁷³ Nimmo pp. 147-148. Mrs Nimmo graduated in 1898, as Miss Rule, with a First Class Honours in English.

⁷⁷⁴ Murray's (1910) translation of Medea's first speech 'O Women of Corinth... Oh of all things upon earth that bleed and grow, a herb most bruised is woman.' *Medea* (1910) pp.14-15 was adopted as an anthem at Suffragette rallies.

⁷⁷⁵ GUA Folder DC 233

⁷⁷⁶ *Glasgow University Court Minutes 1935-1936* p. 21

⁷⁷⁷ B. W. Welsh *After the Dawn: A Record of the Pioneer Work in Edinburgh for the Higher Education of Women* (Edinburgh, 1939) p. 1 The opposition by women to electoral emancipation should not surprise see J. Bush *Women Against the Vote: Female Anti-Suffrage in Britain* (Oxford, 2007).

the aims of the Society. In August 1867 the University of London was given the power to hold special examinations for women and in the same year the Essay Society was renamed Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association and in their first circular stated their modest aims:

Young ladies, who have completed the usual curriculum of private schools, have no way of obtaining the higher education in Science, Philosophy and literature which our Universities offer to young men. The Association has been organised to supply that want...*It is not the aim of the Association to train for professions* [my emphasis]; but its promoters desire, in the education of women, to give them the advantages of a system already acknowledged to be well suited for the mental training of the other sex⁷⁷⁸

The ladies expected no more than 50 to enrol in the event 'between 400 and 500 thronged the hall and 265 enrolled themselves as students. The ages ranged from sixteen to sixty or even older'.⁷⁷⁹ A decade later the Secretary to the Association was to publicly observe 'It was found in Edinburgh that the Association, instead of leading the public, had to be led to a great extent by the public.'⁷⁸⁰ The initial success led to the development of a range of annual courses in fourteen different subjects including not just English but Logic, Biblical Criticism, Latin and Greek, the figures for Latin and Greek plus the most popular subject are given beneath.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid pp 3-4.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁰ L. Stevenson *The Higher Education of Women: A Paper Read at the Social Science Congress at Aberdeen, September 1877* (Edinburgh, 1877) p. 6. There is a copy of this pamphlet at Glasgow University Library indexed as *Pamphlets on Education*, Education JB 14 1868-S.

**Table 8 (d) Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association: Class Attendances
1867-1877⁷⁸¹**

<i>Classes</i>	<i>1867-68</i>	<i>1868-69</i>	<i>1869-70</i>	<i>1870-71</i>	<i>1871-72</i>	<i>1872-73</i>	<i>1873-74</i>	<i>1874-75</i>	<i>1875-76</i>	<i>1876-77</i>
English	265	129	141	84	64	55	78	67	93	70
Latin						18	9	16	5	8
Greek									18	
Total all classes	265	335	292	220	204	219	335	239	252	212

Looking back on the first ten years of the Association, the Honorary Secretary, Louisa Stevenson, gave her analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Edinburgh Association's work.⁷⁸² Her position and therefore one assumes that of the Association, is that:

sound secondary education is as important for women as for men and this demands that there be a recognised definite University standard...and the attainment of a University certificate must be made impossible until the aspirant's disciplinary education in such subjects as Latin and Arithmetic has been tested and approved.

She admits that in Edinburgh 'classes were organised more with a view to securing large numbers of students, than to furthering the culture of real ones.' She was clearly a woman of independent wealth and views who spoke her mind. In this address to the Social Science Congress she dismisses as 'fancy subjects: Political Economy, Physiology, Geology, Botany or a Modern Language.' For any 'ill-trained clever woman' can 'get up' these topics. Stevenson insists that for true equality women must be 'obliged to pass in Latin, Greek, Mathematics and Logic.'⁷⁸³

In 1874 Edinburgh University offered a university certificate in arts subjects open to women and three years later the University Calendar listed the Association's classes in

⁷⁸¹ Ibid, p. 6.

⁷⁸² Stevenson (1835-1908) is one of the most significant figures in the Scottish woman's movement: she gave evidence to the Commission on University Education (1887), she was committee member of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and was instrumental in the founding the Edinburgh School of Cookery in 1875. This school later became Queen Margaret College and in 2007 Queen Margaret University.

⁷⁸³ Stevenson (1877) p 9.

these topics. This development led to the creation, by the Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association (ELEA) after repeated requests, of correspondence tuition courses; thus in 1876:

There were fifty two correspondents doing the...work; a few living in England, many in the North of Ireland and the rest from all parts of Scotland – ladies in prosperous Lowland county towns, governesses who spent lonely evenings in country - house schoolrooms, teachers in schools. Letters came from the far north; from the wild glens of the west; from Skye, and from the Isles; from daughters of Highland manses.⁷⁸⁴

The Association was reconstituted in 1879 as the Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women; as elsewhere in Scotland the aim now was nothing less than equal access for women to the Scotland's universities. On October 19th 1892 women first crossed the quadrangle of the University as fully matriculated students and Miss Mair reflected:

The initial period with its efforts, cares, its happy strivings is passed; the next period is begun. Its success is in the hands of those women who are the first to pass through the now opened doors.⁷⁸⁵

In the same year the Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women was dissolved, its mission fulfilled.

'Mere numbers': The Resurrection of St Andrews

Up until the middle of the nineteenth century both the town and the University of St Andrews seemed to be on an inexorable path to oblivion. The town and its College had charm, the charm of decay. Lord Cockburn visiting the town in 1844 provides a vivid portrait of this backwater:

There are few shops, and thank God, no trade or manufactures. I could not detect a single steam-engine, and their navy consisted of three coal sloops which lay within

⁷⁸⁴ Welsh (1939) p. 11.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid p 52.

a small pier composed of larger stones laid rudely, though strongly together upon a natural quay of rock. The gentry of the place consists of professors, retired Indian saving lairds, old ladies and gentlemen with humble purses, families resorting here for golf and education, or for economy, or for sea bathing..⁷⁸⁶

The Census figures tell the story:

Table 8 (e) Scottish Census Figures 1901-1931

	<i>1801</i>	<i>1851</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1931</i>
Glasgow	77,000	329,000	762,000	1,090,000
Edinburgh	90,768	208,477	413,008	439,010
Aberdeen	26,992	71,793	153,503	167,258
Dundee	26,084	78,931	161,173	175,585
St Andrews	4,203	5,107	7,619	9,987

All the commercial energy and entrepreneurial dynamism in the area seem to be located 13 miles away, across the river Tay, in Dundee.

The parlous state of the University of St Andrews is reflected in its matriculation figures: lacking a distinguished Medical Faculty like Edinburgh and Glasgow or the vast hinterland and generous bursary endowments of Aberdeen the University's situation seemed desperate, without any possible relief. What made matters much worse for the University was the fact that the agricultural depression of the 1870s severely reduced its income as this was largely derived from the rentals paid by local tenant farmers; by 1876 it was £3,000 in debt.⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸⁶ Lord Cockburn *Circuit Journeys* Hawick (1983) p. 144. Entry for April 28th 1844.

⁷⁸⁷ S. Sellers "'Mischievous to the Public Interest': the Lady Literate in Arts Diploma and the Admission of Women to the University of St Andrews, 1876-1914' in *Launch Site for English Studies. Three Centuries of Literary Studies at the University of St Andrews* ed. R. Crawford St Andrews (1997) p.112

Table 8 (f) Scottish Universities Matriculation Figures 1861-1879⁷⁸⁸

	<i>1861-1862</i>	<i>1864-1865</i>	<i>1870-1871</i>	<i>1874-1875</i>
<i>Glasgow</i>	1140	1179	1279	1484
<i>Edinburgh</i>	1462	1420	1768	2076
<i>Aberdeen</i>	664	551	609	662
<i>St Andrews</i>	163	166	172	141

These low matriculation figures meant that the fee income and therefore the professors' salaries were considerably lower than at other Scottish universities. The nadir was reached in 1876 when the student population was 130 in total. But the fortunes of the university did revive in a quite remarkable way. Table 8 (a) confirms how important by 1910-1911 women undergraduates were to the University: at 58% of the student cohort, they constituted a larger proportion of the student community than at any other Scottish university; in terms of the United Kingdom the percentage was 26%, and at Cambridge, for example, the figure was 9%.⁷⁸⁹

Two developments certainly saved the situation at St Andrews: the launch in 1877 of the qualification 'Literate in Arts' targeted specially at women, and the uneasy but important relationship that developed between the St Andrews and the new University College at Dundee, after its foundation in 1883.⁷⁹⁰

The Literate in Arts, renamed in 1900 'Lady Literate in Arts' (LLA)⁷⁹¹, qualification offered a named university qualification that could be studied at home. It thus dealt with many of the problems and concerns felt about the education of women:

⁷⁸⁸ Source: Royal Commission (1878) Vol. IV: *Evidence and Appendices*

⁷⁸⁹ C. Dyhouse *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities 1870-1939* (1995) Appendix 1 p. 248 Dyhouse is admittedly claiming her figures are 'full time students (men and women) in British universities', but then makes the disclaimer 'these figures are not comprehensive.'

⁷⁹⁰ Space does not allow any discussion of the fact that the revival of the fortunes of this ancient university was part of a wider revival in the reputation of this royal burgh. The key figure here was Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair, a graduate of St Andrews, who reformed the sanitation and housing of St Andrews. The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews dates from 1834 and was mightily supplied by passengers who arrived at the burgh's railway station opened in 1852 and closed in 1969.

⁷⁹¹ The renaming took place to avoid public confusion over an LA qualification being offered by Edinburgh.

A major factor in the success of the LLA was that it...accorded with contemporary views that a woman's place was at home and reassured fathers and husbands fearful at the thought of women living in residence together and attending classes with men. It also offered women teachers who could not obtain or afford a place at training college a qualification [in 1879 the LLA moved its examination dates from April to June for the benefit of practising teachers].⁷⁹²

The fact that there was no restriction as to age, no time limit on gaining the group award and, initially at least, no entrance requirement simply added to the attractiveness of the qualification.⁷⁹³ Crucially the University saw this award as not being confined applicants from Fife or indeed Scotland but from the whole United Kingdom.

For the first diet of examinations there were twenty subjects including Latin and Greek and candidates sat the examination in one of four centres: London, Halifax, Dundee and in St Andrews itself. Candidates could elect to take examinations either at Pass or Honours Level. The University was very clear that this qualification was to be regarded in all but name as being the same as the St Andrews degree. The standard of attainment for Pass and Honours is the same as that required for the MA Degree in the subjects included in the University curriculum, the books prescribed, the questions set and the examination times being identical.⁷⁹⁴ In order to gain the award the candidate had to pass in five subjects one which must include a language; the fees were set at two guineas

The classical curriculum was often conducted at long range and in many cases in isolation: the Latin book list for 1882-1883 included three books of Tacitus, Plautus' *Captivi*, two books of Lucretius, three books of Virgil, unseens, composition in Latin and questions on ancient history. In Greek, for the same year, the list six books of Homer, two plays of Sophocles and one by Aeschylus, two books of Thucydides, unseens, Greek prose

⁷⁹² Sellers (1997) p. 112

⁷⁹³ An entrance qualification was introduced in 1881 when applicants were required to have passed the local university examinations before embarking on their LLA studies

⁷⁹⁴ *St Andrews University Calendar 1882-1883* p 207. James Scotland's observation that the LLA was 'hardly a degree' is surely erroneous. J. Scotland *The History of Scottish Education Vol. 2 From 1872 to the present day* (1969) p. 158

composition and again ancient history. In the UK there did exist several means of preparing for the Lady Literate in Arts examinations:

Many [women] made their preparation through correspondence schools specially accredited to the scheme. Others were prepared through finishing schools, and training colleges, and later some had completed part of their course at universities; for example, University College, Nottingham, from 1898 provided special courses in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English for LLA candidates.⁷⁹⁵

All later sources agree on the great success of this scheme, indeed the figures speak for themselves:

Table 8 (g) Ladies Literate in Arts: Statistics 1877-1931

<i>Total Entered</i>	<i>First Time Candidates</i>	<i>Passed in One or More Subject</i>	<i>Received Diploma of L.L.A</i>
36,017	11,441	27,682	5,117

Over 300 examination centres were used around the world to conduct these examinations; among the more exotic were Antioch, Shanghai, Stellenbosch and Terre Haute, Indiana⁷⁹⁶

The decision to terminate the examination, in 1931, was due in part to the fact that:

the University Court [took over] financial control in 1910 of what was to them no more than a useful money making asset...the new generation of Professors felt no responsibility for the success of such a scheme, but that that they were embarrassed by it. Even though in 1923 there were proposals to expand the scheme in India, whence interest was shown, nothing was done, and in the next year there were still over 400 candidates the end of the scheme was virtually accepted.⁷⁹⁷

⁷⁹⁵ R. N. Smart 'Literate Ladies: A Fifty Year Experiment', *The Alumnus Chronicle: The Official Organ of the Alumnus Association of the University of St Andrews*, 59, June 1968, p. 27.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 28-31.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 25. By 1910 out of 910 candidates only a 100 were from Scotland and it had ceased to be distinctively Scottish award with Scottish candidates dominating the lists and providing the majority of candidates.

The LLA examination raised the profile of the university internationally and proved a profitable enterprise.⁷⁹⁸ It can be best seen, perhaps, as a very successful attempt to guarantee the survival of the University, by increasing student numbers, raising funds and establishing an international reputation for the institution.

The second major factor which revived the fortunes of the University was its troubled collaboration with Dundee, which led to the creation of the University College of Dundee which became, in turn, in 1967, Scotland's first modern university. The reason for some form of association was apparent to nearly all by the mid-nineteenth century. Dundonians looked south of the Tweed and noted the creation of university colleges in Manchester (1851), Bristol (1876), Leeds (1874), Sheffield (1879) and above all Birmingham (1880) and demanded to know why Scotland's third largest city could not have a centre of higher learning providing, like Birmingham but unlike the exclusively Arts courses at St Andrews, a specifically advanced scientific and technological education for its citizens. The ancient University, decaying, impoverished and with embarrassingly low matriculation numbers, was desperate to gain access to some of Dundee's wealth and potentially very large student numbers; as Matthew Heddle, Professor of Chemistry at St Andrews, starkly put it, in 1876, 'The choice was Dundee, or death.'⁷⁹⁹ An added complication was that St Andrews needed access to the new Dundee Royal Infirmary, opened in 1855, to complete the clinical training of medical students:

At the D.R.I. candidates for degrees were examined, before Dundee had any university institution - the '50 guinea men' who were said by the wicked to come up from England to 'buy' St Andrews medical degrees.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁸ The profits were used to create bursaries for female students and to part cover the costs of University Hall, the women's hall of residence.

⁷⁹⁹ Quoted in D. Southgate *University Education in Dundee: A Centenary Celebration*. (Edinburgh, 1982) p. 2.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid p 6. When this examination was sharply criticised in March 1875 by the General Medical Council Visitors they were told and were satisfied, said Professor Nicholson [Natural and Civil History] that the qualification 'was practically an honorary degree.' Ibid, p. 16.

The relationship was bedevilled from the start by the fact that the individuals involved were either of the 'Dundee party' or the 'St Andrews party'; there were no neutrals on this issue. Thus, for example, the Marquess of Lorne son of the Chancellor of St Andrews [the Duke of Argyll] and son-in-law of Queen Victoria wrote of his alma mater, St Andrews, that 'he didn't want to see the old place tied up with strings of jute round its neck, and drown in pots of marmalade'. On the other side of the argument, a letter writer, 'Common Sense', in the *Dundee Advertiser* commented acidly

The best Dundee High School students went to swim in the intellectual life of Edinburgh and Glasgow, not to be stranded on the sandbank that is St Andrews, whose examinations were of a lower standard than Edinburgh. The ancient university was dying of old age and a radical Commission would make short work of University institutions more remarkable for lofty airs than for work.⁸⁰¹

The truth was for as long as Dundee and St Andrews were linked in university terms 'tactlessness and sometimes crude abuse in the public prints were a two-way traffic.'⁸⁰²

The catalyst for the Dundee cause came from a member of the wealthy merchant class, a scion of one of the great mill-owning dynasties, Miss Mary Ann Baxter. She decided to bequeath £120,000 to the city for the setting up of a university college but, unlike Mrs Elder in Glasgow, she was very specific as to the nature of this foundation for she:

wanted to establish her College before any approach to St Andrews ...she did not want her project to be in the tainted hands of 'the friends of St Andrews.'⁸⁰³

This new College was to be like the new English colleges, mainly devoted to scientific and technological studies which had a direct link to local industrial and commercial needs. The College's aim was to promote

the education of persons of both sexes [in] the study of science, literature and the fine arts but with the fundamental condition that no student, professor, teacher or

⁸⁰¹ Ibid p. 67.

⁸⁰² Ibid p 57.

⁸⁰³ Ibid p 24.

any other officer...shall be required to make a declaration as to his or her religious opinions or to submit to any test of them and that nothing shall be introduced in the manner or mode of education in reference to any religious or theological subject⁸⁰⁴

Her 1881 Deed of Endowment and Trust created in effect a joint-stock company providing for Trustees, Governors, a Council and an Education Board 'then and forever bound to protect and defend the existence of the College and its essential purpose'.⁸⁰⁵ So legally watertight were her conditions that it would require an Act of Parliament, in 1953, to annul them.

The first task of the Council of the College was the appointment of a Principal. In the event it was a classicist who was selected, the 26 year old William Peterson who had had a dazzling career as a student: MA First Class Honours at Edinburgh; Ferguson Scholar in Classics; First Class in Classical Moderations and First Class in *Literae Humaniores* at Corpus Christi College, Oxford and then working [1879-1882] under W. Y. Sellar at Edinburgh. His application to Dundee was supported by testimonials from the President of Corpus Christi as well as J. S. Blackie, R. L. Nettleship and David Masson. In accepting the post of Principal, salary £750, he also undertook also the duties of the Chair of Classics and Ancient History.

The clear and urgent to do seemed to be to forge some link with the ancient university 13 miles away that now enjoyed good railway links with Dundee: St Andrews Arts courses would be complemented by the science and technology courses of Dundee; the Classics would be taught in both institutions; St Andrews would gain access to the medical facilities of Dundee and over and above that the Dundee students would gain the imprimatur of a St Andrews degree and Dundee's professors would be recognised as such not least for the very important issue of pension rights. This natural synergy was given extra impetus by the fact that the Universities (Scotland) Act of 1889 had set up a system of inspection of Scotland's universities with Commissioners given the clear remit to set out Ordinances

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid 31.

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid p. 30.

describing the necessary governance of these institutions. It is therefore unsurprising then that in March 1890 an Agreement was signed between the two institutions confirming their union; this act was later confirmed by an Ordinance issued by the University Commissioners. This Agreement, however, merely acted as a prelude to a series of lengthy legal actions brought by St Andrews, against Dundee, which involved not only Scotland's highest civil court the Court of Session but also, in 1896-1897, the House of Lords and the Privy Council.

One man was most closely connected with leading 'the St Andrews party' in the 1890s: the Principal James Donaldson. He had one of the most distinguished careers of any man in Victorian Scotland; coming from a very humble background he had studied under Melvin at Aberdeen Grammar School then was an undergraduate at Marischal College, Aberdeen and after Berlin; then returning to Scotland he was, for two years an Assistant to J.S. Blackie at Edinburgh; Rector of Stirling High School (1854-1856), then for twenty-five years first Classics Master and then Rector at Royal High School of Edinburgh; in 1881 he returned to Aberdeen as Professor of Humanity, leaving there in 1886 to become the Principal of the United Colleges at St Andrews. It would seem that Donaldson as Principal of the United Colleges had two very clear intentions: to utterly destroy any sense of Dundee College as a separate institution, 'he wanted...the College to be submerged in the University of St Andrews'⁸⁰⁶ and secondly to make St Andrews:

attractive to students from the south and distinctive in character from other Scottish universities...University College of Dundee did not fit into such a development, which American money and Government grants made possible.⁸⁰⁷

This attempt to create 'an Oxford of the North' was violently rejected by at least one of the Dundee staff, Professor Patrick Geddes. In the columns of the *Dundee Advertiser* Geddes

⁸⁰⁶ Southgate p. 91.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid pp 1112-1113 Southgate is referring to the fact that Andrew Carnegie was Rector of St Andrews from 1901 to 1907 and made substantial gifts to the university, including a major extension to the University's Library

denounced such an ambition as 'idealistic, anglophile and unacceptable to Scotsman'.⁸⁰⁸ A view Donaldson and his staff clearly chose to ignore. It is perhaps surprising that although both Geddes and Donaldson are mentioned in *The Democratic Intellect*, Davie seems unaware of their mutually incompatible views about the true nature of a Scottish university whether ancient or modern.

In any bitter war there are casualties and that was the case here: in 1896, exhausted by the 'mulish attitude'⁸⁰⁹ of St Andrews, Peterson left Dundee to take up the post of Principal of McGill University in Montreal. Scotland's oldest university does not emerge well from the events of the 1890s; but Donaldson's vision of an 'Oxford of the north' did succeed, along with the success of LLA qualification, in reviving the fortunes and reputation of the institution.

Women: Schooling and Employment

This chapter has concentrated on the efforts individually and collectively by women to gain admission to undergraduate courses of study but it would be appropriate, at this point, to say a little about the schooling available to Scottish women and the opportunities that existed for them to enter the only profession easily available to them, teaching.

It is extremely difficult, prior to the Census of 1851, to create an accurate statistical portrait as to how many girls were receiving some form of organised education.. The 1851 Census conducted a, voluntary, survey of Scottish schools and this does for the first time give some idea of how many female students were studying Latin and Greek. In all 3,083 schools responded the bulk of which were either parochial schools (900) or burgh schools (527); the rest were made up largely of church schools of various denominations, for example eight years after the Great Disruption there were over 600 Free Church schools. The main statistics are summarised in Table 6 (h).

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid p 112. Patrick Geddes was perhaps the most audacious of all Petersen's Dundee appointments. Geddes had studied under T. H. Huxley and was part of a famous circle of Victorian scientists that included Darwin and Wallace.

⁸⁰⁹ M. Shafe *University Education in Dundee 1881-1981 : A Pictorial History* (Dundee, 1982) p. 33

8 (h) Ancient Languages (Scottish Schools) 1851⁸¹⁰

Boys' Public Schools	
Total Number of Schools	3083
Schools Teaching Classics	1331 (45%)
Girls' Public Schools	
Total Number of Schools	3163
Schools Teaching Classics	170 (5%)
Male Pupils	
Total Number of Boys	153,712
Boys Learning Classics	9111
Female Pupils	
Total Number of Girls	112,058
Girls Learning Classics	337

It is also possible using the 1851 figures to make some comparison with the situation in England and Wales and the comparison is very much in Scotland's favour:

401 private English and Welsh schools (1.9%) were reported to be teaching girls Latin compared with a mere 18 Scottish schools (a figure which nevertheless constituted 1% of such schools), but girls were being taught Latin at only 44 (0.4%) public schools in England and Wales compared with 170 (5.4%) in Scotland. Furthermore, if all English and Welsh grammar, collegiate and endowed schools are discounted to exclude any predominately middle-class schools, then Latin was only being taught to girls at only 27 schools, 10 of which were supported by minority groups (including four by Jews, two by the Society of Friends and two by Wesleyans) and so may also have been middle class. But even if all 27 schools are

⁸¹⁰ There is an element of double counting at work here: 'boys public schools/girls public schools' includes *all* schools attended by boys and *all* schools attended by girls, so mixed schools are counted twice.

included, then in 1851 girls were being taught Latin at one in every 369 elementary public schools in England and Wales, compared with one in every 19 such schools in Scotland.⁸¹¹

A much more restricted but very important source is provided by the Annual Inspection Reports of the Dick Bequest, which began its operations in 1832. A report presented in 1865 notes that in the schools in question 'The average daily attendance at parochial schools during the year 1864 was 71.4; of these, 52.1 were boys and 19.3 were girls.'⁸¹² As those parochial schoolmasters who fell within the orbit of the Bequest were usually graduates, it is safe to assume that the girls in these schools had access at some point to Latin; but here as in so much else the north east was almost certainly different from the rest of Scotland. The terms of the Bequest excluded the burgh schools and application could only be made from the counties of Aberdeenshire, Banff and Moray.

The most important development affecting the school curriculum was, however, ideological, from the middle of the nineteenth century:

There was an increasing emphasis from upper class women, on the importance of domestic training and providing for the moral welfare of the future female teachers who were themselves expected to transmit these same values to working class girls. This 'home-mission' concern by upper class women was also evident in associations formed in connection with the Established Church and the Free Church to bring education or more especially the Bible, needlework and morality to working class children in remote and impoverished parts of Scotland.⁸¹³

It was not just the school curriculum that was affected by this campaign: for example, the timetable for women attending the Free Church Training College in Edinburgh was very different from their male colleagues' workload: the men were taught, amongst other

⁸¹¹ L. Moore, 'Invisible scholars: Girls learning Latin and Mathematics in the Elementary Public Schools of Scotland before 1872', *History of Education* (1984) Vol. 13 No. 2, p. 128.

⁸¹² S Laurie *Report on Education Addressed to the Trustees of the Dick Bequest* (Edinburgh, 1865) p 241.

⁸¹³ Moore (1984) p. 130.

subjects, Latin [three periods a week] and Greek [three periods a week], the women had Sewing, Penmanship[sic] , French and Domestic Economy instead.⁸¹⁴

New fee paying schools were being opened to provide a suitable education for the daughters of middle class Scottish families. Here again the academic community at St Andrews took the lead: in October 1877 the St Andrews School for Girls⁸¹⁵ was opened and counted amongst its key supporters Lewis Campbell, Professor of Greek, and his wife. The first headmistress, Louisa Lumsden, was a graduate of Girton and the curriculum adopted at the school placed great emphasis on the classics:

In the sixth form the girls were taught Latin, Mathematics, Greek, French, history and geography, and in most cases, German. In the fifth more time was given to English and Greek and German were alternative.⁸¹⁶

This school was very deliberately setting its eyes on Oxford and Cambridge:

Miss Dove [Lumsden's successor, in 1882] saw that it was politic to adopt one examination which would be recognised as qualifying for entrance to most universities and professions, and selected the Higher Certificate of the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board for which the school entered for the first time in 1887.⁸¹⁷

Thus St Leonards ignored the Scottish examination (the Leaving Certificate) although the same subjects were examined. This point was made quite bluntly by one of Miss Lumsden's successors, Miss Bentick-Smith, in her address, in May 1914, to the Classical Association of Scotland:

Oxford and Cambridge, the two universities for which we prepare girls chiefly, demand Latin and some Greek in their Entrance Examinations. It is no exaggeration to say that our retention of Greek at St Leonards hangs almost entirely

⁸¹⁴ M Cruickshank *A History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland* (1970) Appendix E pp 242-245

⁸¹⁵ Renamed in 1881 St Leonards School. In the early years Henry Craik acted as one of the two Special Examiners, the other was James Bryce. *St Leonards School 1877-1927* (Oxford, n.d.) p. 152. Craik was at the time, 1887-1882, working as an examiner in the Scotch Education Department.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 38.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp 39-40.

on the necessity for Greek in Little-go and Responsions.⁸¹⁸ If at this moment compulsory Greek were abolished in Oxford and Cambridge, probably only two or three of the 13 girls now struggling with Greek would continue their efforts. Which is tantamount to saying that we even now teach Greek only for utilitarian purposes and not as an instrument of education and culture. Were Greek no longer required for entrance to a university, it would, in a school like St Leonards, become an Extra Subject—that is, one taught only on payment of a special fee; in the ordinary, less wealthy school it would become extinct.⁸¹⁹

As Bentick-Smith's remarks suggest, St Leonards, like many other of the new Scottish private schools, had an extremely small school roll: in at the opening in 1877 there was a total of 50 girls enrolled, eight years later the figure had risen to 97.⁸²⁰ This school did produce Scotland's most famous female classicist of the nineteenth century, Agnata Ramsay, who in 1887 came first in the first division at Cambridge but this was hardly 'a lass of parts.'⁸²¹

In Scotland's largest city similar developments took place: the Park School for Girls opened in Glasgow on September 1st 1880. The first headmistress of the school, Georgina Kinnear, was like Lumsden a graduate of Girton College and amongst her staff was a Miss Leslie, (LLA, St Andrews). Laurel Bank School for Girls, also in Glasgow, opened in September 1903 and Margaret Watson, one of the two headmistresses at the opening, was another product of the St Andrews LLA programme. This pattern of appointing female teachers by the LLA route was not restricted to the private sector: in nearby Hillhead High School, opened in 1885, Esther Wilson and Anna Jackson, whilst employed as pupil-

⁸¹⁸ The first undergraduate examinations at Cambridge and Oxford. Greek ceased to be a compulsory subject at Oxbridge after 1919.

⁸¹⁹ M. Bentick-Smith, 'The Teaching of Classics in Girls Schools', *Classical Association of Scotland Proceedings 1913-1914* (Edinburgh, 1914) pp75-76. Prior to her appointment at St Leonards, Bentick-Smith had been Director of Studies at Girton College. She was the first woman to address the Association although there had been women members since the organisation's foundation in 1902.

⁸²⁰ *St Leonards School 1877-1927*, pp. 10 and 14.

⁸²¹ Her achievement was the subject of a famous Punch cartoon, the original of which hangs still in the Ramsay family home, Banff House, Alyth, Perthshire. The cartoon is wrongly dated in the book above. It was not until 1948 that women were allowed to be awarded a degree at Cambridge.

teachers at the school passed, in 1892, the LLA with Honours and were then appointed as full-time teachers at the school.⁸²²

Throughout the nineteenth century some ability in Latin was essential to gain access to undergraduate studies: the doors may have been opened to women in 1892 but Scotland's Bursary Awards demanded proficiency in Latin and it was still a compulsory element in the Arts degree programme. Teaching did offer a possible career to single women as the demand was certainly growing.

Table 8 (i) Schools and Teachers 1872-1905⁸²³

<i>Date</i>	<i>Inspected Schools and Grant Aided</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Certificated Teachers</i>	<i>Pupil teachers</i>
1873	2,192	225,300	2,663	3,759
1885	3,081	455,655	6,365	3,693
1905	3,244	696,381	13,604	4,191

Women clearly did occupy junior positions in Infant schools either as for a period pupil teachers or finally as qualified [certificated by the Inspectorate] teachers but their salaries reflected their status whether qualified or aspiring.

⁸²² 'Thereafter, they spent their whole teaching lives at Hillhead.' A.D.C. *Hillhead High School 1885-1961* (Glasgow, 1962) p.9. The School Log book for the same year records that a total of 30 female pupils took the LLA examinations in English, education, History and French. School Archives Mitchell Library Glasgow SR10/3/662/6/1 1885-1905.

⁸²³ Cruickshank (1970) p 236

Table 8 (j) Average Annual Salaries of Certified Teachers 1872-1918⁸²⁴

	Men	Women
1873	£110	£58
1883	£135	£67
1893	£135	£64
1903	£148	£74
1913	£166	£87

The 1880s and 1890s were the period when women campaigned successfully to gain entrance to Scotland's universities. Their presence after 1892 certainly dramatically increased numbers on the Art's Faculty courses and thus made the numbers studying the compulsory subject of Latin healthier than they would have been otherwise. The involvement of women in higher education also helped mend the fortunes of St Andrews and the growth of new schools and particularly new private schools gave the unmarried female classicist a career path; albeit as a spinster and at a much lower salary than men. A recent work on Victorian women writers and the classics makes the following *ex cathedra* pronouncement

The autodidact who acquires sufficient learning to be worthy of admission to the ancient universities, proving that he or she could rival men with a classical education, is a notable fantasy figure in the nineteenth century.⁸²⁵

This and all previous chapters have been an attempt to refute this charge of 'fantasy'. There is considerable evidence, in Scotland, to show that many men and, latterly, women could and did gain access both to the Classics and to a university education which would certainly included Latin, if not after, 1892, Greek. There was a road, but not a royal one, to the classical learning in nineteenth century Scotland both for men or and for women.

⁸²⁴ Ibid p.234

⁸²⁵ I. Hurst *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer* (Oxford, 2006) pp.21-22. Scotland is absent from Hirst's analysis ; she should perhaps have entitled this section of her work 'English Universities' rather than 'Universities'.

Conclusion

The history of Classical Studies in Scotland has yet to be written, and whoever undertakes it will have a formidable task. The range and variety of evidence to be shifted and analysed is enormous: every period in history and every part of the country has its own story to tell - one might say every classroom and every individual who passed through it.⁸²⁶

These are the words of Patrick Edwards, Professor of Classics at Aberdeen, addressing the annual meeting, in April 1986, of the Classical Association in Glasgow. One of the initial ambitions of this thesis was to describe what exactly was meant by the phrase 'a nineteenth century Scottish classical education'; in either university or school or both. Thus, much of the work set out here has been to list the set books; detail the timetabling; provide biographies of the teachers and examine their testing methods.

When Davie was interviewed in 2002 he said, 'There are two kinds of [university] education: the system that asks the questions and never gives the answers and the type that gives the answers and never reveals the questions.' Certainly during the nineteenth century the Scottish tradition, 'the education of speculation' to use Bagehot's phrase, came under severe threat due to the twin pressures of entrance examinations and the introduction of specialised honours degrees; creating 'the education of facts'.⁸²⁷ Davie chose, however, to ignore several very important issues: he had nothing to say about the very different institutional histories of the Scottish universities or the very powerful position they enjoyed in the local, national and international community. In 1890, for example, the University of Glasgow, in its Arts Faculty, could boast of a teaching staff that included Lord Kelvin, Gilbert Murray, A.C. Bradley and George Ramsay. These were men more than capable of defending Glasgow's, Scotland's and their own best interests.

⁸²⁶ Later published. Edwards, P. 'Aberdeen and Its Classical Tradition', *Aberdeen University Review* No. 176 Autumn (1986) pp.410-426.

⁸²⁷ W. Bagehot, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, ed. N. St-John Stevas (1965) p.328.

The 1831 Report of the Royal Commission on Scotland's Universities recommended two major changes: the introduction of national inspection and a common curriculum. This did not happen to Scotland's universities but this is precisely what did happen in Scotland's schools: the creation of the Scotch Education Department based in London (1873), the introduction of the School Leaving Certificate (1888) and above all the work of the schools' Inspectorate helped to create a highly centralised system of state control. These Inspectors had enormous powers: they made decisions about grants to individual schools which directly affected teachers' salaries at that school; they judged in the classroom whether a teacher should be 'certificated' or not; and finally they made public reports on what they regarded as good and bad teaching practice naming and shaming 'bad' teachers. There was considerable resentment about the fact that some Inspectors had neither attended a Scottish school nor worked within the system as teachers.⁸²⁸ This could have been fertile ground for Davie's thesis, not least since it was from this tightly controlled education system that the Scottish universities recruited their undergraduates.

Can we pronounce when the last rites were finally recited over Greek and Latin? The answer must be a qualified 'no'. Greek, as has already been stated, ceased to be a compulsory university subject after 1892; yet twenty years later Harrower's map shows it surviving, if not flourishing, in many rural districts of Scotland. Indeed the 1921 Crewe Committee's *Report on the Classics in Education* noted:

We were told of a school at Stornoway in the Isle of Lewis (the Nicholson Institute) attended largely by the children of crofters and fishermen in which nearly 30 pupils were learning Greek...and those in the highest class were reading Homer, Aeschylus and Plato.⁸²⁹

The asphodel continued to bloom despite the fierce gales.

In terms of Latin the apparent death knell was sounded in 1927 when the Scottish Universities, after eight years of discussion, amended General Regulation V (i) of

⁸²⁸ T. Bone, *R. School Inspection in Scotland 1840-1966* (1968) pp.137-138.

⁸²⁹ Crewe Report p.213

Ordinance No. 70 making Latin no longer compulsory for university entrance.

Interviewing retired classicists who took Latin at school in the wake of that decision they agreed the subject enjoyed immense prestige and that the senior staff and the Rector were invariably classicists. Pressure was certainly placed on the more able pupils to take Latin and Greek; not least as, it seemed that, the reputation of the school, and indeed the local community, in some ways, rested on the fact that in the Bursary Competition a Nan Dunbar (Glasgow) or a David West (Aberdeen) or an Elizabeth Farmer (St Andrews) could best the products of Scotland's private schools.

.Little or no serious work has been attempted on the private papers of Scottish classicists: the 150 boxes that comprise the Harrower Papers have yet to be seriously investigated; the rather misleadingly named 'Jebb Scrapbooks' at Glasgow give a detailed portrait of the yearly work of a Professor of Greek and at St Andrews, the Donaldson Papers cover the life-long interests and commitments of a distinguished school and university administrator and also a leading patristic scholar. One of the great adornments of Scottish academic life was Sir D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson whose private papers occupy 21 metres of shelf space at St Andrews, including 26,000 letters.⁸³⁰ There is a need too for a critical study, for none exists, of Sir Henry Craik, as he is, by far the most important figure in terms of influencing the direction of Scottish schooling, if not of Scottish education itself.⁸³¹

The way forward is perhaps best described by an English historian whom Davie admired:

[The historian] will often have to work from the modern to the ancient, from the clear to the vague, from the known to the unknown. Of course he must work forwards as well as backwards; the stream must be traced downwards as well as upwards; but the lower reaches are already mapped and by studying the best maps

⁸³⁰ A catalogue was published by St Andrews in 1987.

⁸³¹ M. Morris *The Suppressed Report: The Fettes College Inspection, 1887* (forthcoming)

of them he will learn where to look for sources.⁸³²

⁸³² Maitland, F. W. 'Why the History of English Law is Not Written.' *Collected Papers of Frederic William Maitland*. Ed Fisher, H.A.L. Vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1911) p. 493. Davie's opening sentence in *The Democratic Intellect* describes Maitland as one who 'understood fairly well the central paradox of Scottish history from 1560 onwards.' Davie is referring here to Maitland's magisterial 'The Anglican Settlement and the Scottish Reformation', written at Lord Acton's invitation and appearing as Chapter XVI in Vol. II of *Cambridge Modern History*. (Cambridge, 1903).

APPENDICES

*Appendix 1: Scottish Chairs of Greek and Humanity*⁸³³

	<i>St Andrews Founded 1411</i>	<i>Glasgow 1451</i>	<i>Edinburgh 1584</i>	<i>Universities of Aberdeen 1495/1593</i> ⁸³⁴
Greek	J Kemp [1747-1748] W Wilson [1748-1769] G Hill [1772-1788] H Hill [1789-1820] A Alexander [1820-1859] W Y Sellar [1859-1863] L Campbell [1863-1892] J Burnet [1892-1926]	A Dunlop [1704-1746] J Moore [1746-1774] J Young [1774-1821] D Sandford [1821-1838] E Lushington [1838-1875] RC Jebb [1875-1889] G Murray [1889-1899] J Phillimore [1899-1906] G Davies [1906-1934]	W Scott [1707-1730] C Drummond [1730-1738] R Law [1738-1741] R Hunter [1741-1774] A Dalzel [1774-1806] G Dunbar [1806-1851] J Blackie [1851-1882] S Butcher [1882-1903] A Mair [1903-1928]	J Leslie K.C [1754-1790] G Gerard K.C. [1790-1796] H Macpherson K.C. [1797-1854] P Campbell K.C. [1854-1855] W Geddes K C [1855-1885] J Harrower [1886-1931] T Haddow M.C. [1723] T Blackwell M.C. [1723-1758] W Kennedy M.C. [1758-1782] J Stuart M.C. [1782-1827] J Brown M.C. [1827-1860]
Humanity	N Young [1747-1753] A Morton [1753-1769] J Cook [1769-1773] J Hill [1773-1775] J Hunter [1775-1835] T Gillespie [1835-1844] W Pyper [1844-1861] J Shairp [1861-1871] A Roberts [1871-1899] W Lindsay [1899-1937]	J Young [1682-1687] A Ross [1706-1735] G Ross [1735-1754] G Muirhead [1754-1773] W Richardson [1773-1815] J Walker [1815-1831] W Ramsay [1831-1863] G Ramsay [1863-1906] J Phillimore [1906-1920]	L Dundas [1690-1727] A Watt [1727-1734] J Kerr [1734-1741] G Stuart [1741-1775] J Hill [1775-1806] A Christison [1806-1820] J Pillans [1820-1863] W Sellar [1863-1890] H Goodhart [1891-1895] W Hardie [1895-1916]	P Gordon K.C. [1669-1695] A Gordon K.C. [1695-1739] T Gordon K.C. [1739-1765] W Ogilvie K.C. 1765-1817 P Forbes K.C. [1817-1847] G Ferguson K.C. [1847-1860] J Blackie M.C. [1839-1851] R MacClure M.C. [1852-1868] J Black [1868-1881] J Donaldson [1881-1886] W Ramsay [1886-1911]

⁸³³ Prior to the eighteenth century teaching was conducted by 'regents' i.e. the professor would take the class through the whole curriculum.

⁸³⁴ Before the 'Fusion' of 1860 the city had two universities: King's College [K.C.] and Marischal College [M.C.].

Appendix 2: Extracts from Interview with Dr George Davie. April 25th 2002

The publication of George Davie's book *The Democratic Intellect*, in 1961, initiated a debate which continues to this day about the role of Scottish universities within the wider community and what exactly was the impact of the reforms made in the nineteenth century. I was very interested to hear his reflections, aged 83, on his famous book forty years later.

Michael Morris Dr Davie what is it like to have written a book that changes the way people think?

George Davie That book made me *enemies*.

[Dr Davie didn't expand on this gnomic opening but judging from the obituaries that appeared after his death, in March 2007, it seems one of these enemies was Sir Edward Appleton, Principal of the University of Edinburgh at the time of the book's first appearance. Davie was it seems silenced for 25 years. See Duncan MacMillan's obituary notice *Scotsman* April 5th 2007]

MM If you were to republish a third edition of *The Democratic Intellect* what changes would you make?

GD The change I wanted to make had to do with the change over at the end of the nineteenth century - the bit I got wrong. Andrew Carnegie was a very important man in this. He gave the universities a great deal of money, £1,000,000 (sic) for what were student fees. However he ruled that no money be given to Divinity, Philosophy or the Classics.

MM Just the 'practical' subjects?

GD The Scottish universities didn't like that but they were glad to get their hands on the money but they became increasingly impatient with him and they did great deal to weaken his position but he was backed up by Lloyd George who approved of his ideas. He wanted easier access to universities but he didn't think much of the Classics

MM He saw that as a class issue?

GD Yes! When Carnegie died [in 1918] Lloyd George brought the Secretary of the Carnegie Trust to London and that was the beginning of the centralization of the control of British universities from London. The Carnegie thing meant that Scottish universities had about twenty years when they were run separately and Lloyd George didn't continue that. That was the main thing.

The other thing was that there was too much of the Oxford and Cambridge thing - at the beginning of the nineteenth century they began to develop Honours [degrees] and so forth. They didn't care very much about Scotland but some [Scots] who went there were keen to have the influence of Oxford and Cambridge increased [in Scotland]. But this didn't continue...there was competition from the English but it was really the red brick ones that were important. They competed with Scottish universities and weakened their place.

MM Academics like R. D. Anderson have observed that it was in the Scottish schools that there was introduced a highly centralised control. The Scottish Education Department was set up and they controlled the curriculum. Do you buy into that argument?

GD Well there's a great deal of truth in that....I haven't done much about the schools... when the Scottish universities were strong the distinction between primary and secondary schools didn't exist. There was just one lot.

MM There simply was no public school tradition

GD There was no public school tradition. It began of course with Fettes where the money was left for funding a school for... orphans. The Conservatives in Scotland decided to make a system of scholarships and the school was to be organised like an English public school. Scottish boys took advantage of the Fettes' Scholarships but didn't get on well with the English public schoolboy types and gradually the Scholarships began to be given to English school boys... Fettes is a *good* school.

MM It was Edinburgh that was very much the focus for this argument?

GD Oh yes of course...the wealthy classes in Edinburgh wanted their boys to be at a public school but not far away

MM There was no boarding tradition in Scotland - the universities were non-residential.

GD No boarding tradition...a few vestiges of it at St Andrews

MM In your book you lay great stress on the tradition of Humanity in Scotland, figures like George Buchanan and the *Psalms* and Ruddiman's *Rudiments*. Do you think that because Latin was such a strong tradition in the Scottish universities and because many of the students were aiming for a career either in the church or the law, then the rhetorical skills Latin would teach was a very important tradition inside the Scottish universities?

GD It was! That was an aspect I really should have written about....It was as peculiar as the [Scottish] mathematical tradition which was Greek based. The Scots took Rhetoric very seriously.

MM But there must have been an overlap. They were teaching the Latin orators in the Humanity classes yet there were also classes in Rhetoric and Logic

GD Yes well Rhetoric modified and it was sometimes called the Theory of Literature as opposed to the Theory of Science. Science has to do with proof, Rhetoric has to do with persuasion. Creates a problem: in what sense, if there was no logic, how could the probative be factored in? Hume on his death bed was reading George Campbell's *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. It's well known that in England English Studies developed late as a model of Classics, but in Scotland English Studies developed out of Rhetoric.....In classics however the Oxford influence was pretty strong and this hindered the development of Greek studies in Scotland...my old Professor, Calder, said 'You have to go to Aberdeen to see what the Scots can do with Greek when left to themselves.'

It took a long time for my book to get published-they had received it in the late 50s

[Davie then went on to talk about the hostility and dismissive attitude displayed towards his book in Scottish academic circles, then and now]

MM So you've *still* got enemies?

GD Oh yes!

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5 Interviews

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Elizabeth Craik, [St Andrews, Girton College] Honorary Professor of Greek, University of
St Andrews, May 14th 2004
George Davie, April 25th 2002 {T}
Sir Kenneth Dover, Chancellor, University of St Andrews, January 30th 2003 {T}
Nan Dunbar [Glasgow, Girton, Ferguson Scholar], Former Fellow Somerville College,
Oxford April 15th 2003 {T}
Mervyn Jones, Former Fellow Magdalen College, Oxford April 15th 2003 {T}
Douglas McDowell, Professor Emeritus of Greek, University of Glasgow, May 13th 2005
Robert Philp, Former Head of Classics, Fettes College, September 22nd 2004
Betty Knox-Sharpe, Lecturer in Humanity, University of Glasgow 1953-1987 February
27th 2004
Peter Walsh, Professor Emeritus of Humanity, University of Glasgow, May 25th 2005
David West, Professor Emeritus of Latin, University of Newcastle, April 14th 2004
Bill Wilkie [Glasgow, Balliol, Ferguson Scholar], HMI Scotland, November 21st 2002 {T}